



Indirect Discharge Permit Program

This fact sheet explains what an industrial discharge permit is, when it is necessary, and what is required of a permit holder.

Many businesses generate industrial wastewater. Different permitting requirements apply to industrial wastewater depending upon whether your business has a direct discharge or an indirect discharge to the waters of the state.

In the state of Ohio, your business is required to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit if you discharge wastewater directly into waters of the state. However, if your business meets the definition of significant industrial user (SIU) and discharges wastewater into a Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTW) that does not have an Ohio EPA-approved pretreatment program, you must obtain written permission from the receiving POTW and apply for and obtain an indirect discharge permit from Ohio EPA.

A list of Ohio EPA-approved pretreatment programs are available at:

http://www.epa.ohio.gov/Portals/35/pretreatment/Approved_Program_Contacts.xlsx .

If you are an SIU and discharge to a POTW with an Ohio EPA-approved pretreatment program, you need not apply for an IDP from Ohio EPA. Instead, you must contact the local POTW for permitting requirements.

Who must apply for an indirect discharge permit?

According to Ohio Administrative Code [\(OAC\) 3745-36-03\(A\)](#), any SIU that discharges process wastewater into a POTW without an Ohio-EPA-approved pretreatment program must apply for and obtain an IDP from Ohio EPA.

Businesses not classified as SIUs are eligible for coverage subject to the permit-by-rule provisions ([OAC 3745-36-06](#)) and do not need to submit applications.

Who is considered an SIU?

As stated in [OAC 3745-36-02](#), an SIU is an industrial user that fits *any* of the following criteria:

- The industrial user's discharge is subject to categorical pretreatment standards (see 40 CFR Chapter I, Subchapter N, Parts 400 to 471); or
- Discharges an average of 25,000 gpd or more of process wastewater to the POTW (process water excludes sanitary, non-contact cooling wastewater, and boiler blowdown wastewaters); or
- Contributes a process wastestream that makes up five percent or more of the average dry weather hydraulic or organic capacity of the treatment plant; or
- Has a reasonable potential for adversely affecting the POTW's operation or for violating any pretreatment standard or requirement.

What are examples of discharges that can adversely affect POTWs or violate pretreatment standards?

Discharges that can adversely affect a POTW or violate pretreatment standards or requirements include:

- A discharge that may allow pollutants to pass through the system and violate the POTW's NPDES permit or [Ohio Water Quality Standards \(WQS\) regulations](#);
- A discharge of pollutants in quantities and flow rate that may inhibit or interfere with POTW operations (e.g. slug discharge of organic high load);

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- Pollutants that may cause corrosive structural damage to the POTW, including discharges less than a pH of 5.0 S.U.
- A discharge that poses fire or explosion hazards to the POTW system (e.g. wastestream with a close cup flashpoint of less than 140 degrees Fahrenheit);
- A solid or viscous discharge that may obstruct the POTW flow (e.g. high levels of oils, grease, and fats);
- A discharge that may inhibit POTW biological activity due to high temperature (e.g. wastestreams that may cause POTW influent temperatures of 104 degrees Fahrenheit or higher);
- A discharge that poses acute worker health and safety problems due to toxic gases, vapors, or fumes; and
- A discharge of any trucked or hauled pollutants except at discharge points designated by the POTW.

How do I know my business is subject to a federal categorical pretreatment standard?

U.S. EPA periodically develops the categorical pretreatment standards (also known as effluent guidelines) for targeted businesses discharging into POTWs.

For more information on effluent guidelines, visit the U.S. EPA website:

<https://www.epa.gov/eg/industrial-effluent-guidelines> .

What are my obligations if I am subject to federal categorical pretreatment standards?

This section applies to industrial users who discharge to POTWs without Ohio EPA-approved pretreatment programs.

Indirect Discharge Permit (IDP) Application

When U.S. EPA publishes categorical pretreatment standards in the Federal Register, existing industrial users subject to such categorical standard(s) and currently discharging to or intending to discharge to a POTW must submit an Indirect Discharge Permit (IDP) Application to Ohio EPA within 180 days after the effective date of the applicable standard. New sources (industrial users to commence discharge after promulgation of an applicable categorical pretreatment standard) must submit an IDP Application to Ohio EPA at least 180 days prior to the commencement of discharge.

Information that is to be submitted in the IDP Application is available in [OAC 3745-36-03](#). In addition, the IDP Application can be submitted electronically through Ohio EPA's [eBusiness Center](#). Note that nothing in this subheading shall be interpreted to waive the IDP Application requirements for SIUs that are not subject to categorical pretreatment standards.

Initial Compliance Report

An Initial Compliance Report is required for new sources applicable to categorical pretreatment standards within 90 days of commencing discharge. For existing sources, an Initial Compliance Report is due within 90 days following the date for final compliance with applicable categorical pretreatment sources. Information that is to be submitted in the Initial Compliance Report is available in [OAC 3745-3-06\(D\)](#)¹.

What are the steps in the permit application process?

1. Facility submits a complete application with an application fee at least 180 days prior to discharging to a POTW (180 days prior to the permit's expiration date for facilities renewing an IDP). To submit the IDP Application forms electronically, see Ohio EPA's eBusiness Center (aka STREAMS).
<https://ebiz.epa.ohio.gov/login.html>
<http://epa.ohio.gov/dsw/ebs.aspx>

¹ As of April 2018, Pretreatment Rules (OAC 3745-3) and Indirect Discharge Permit Rules (OAC 3745-36) are undergoing the five-year review process. The requirements for Initial Compliance Report are currently described in OAC 3745-3-06(D) and are proposed to be duplicated in OAC 3745-36-08(B).

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2. Ohio EPA reviews application and informs the applicant of any deficiencies.
3. Ohio EPA drafts the permit upon the receipt of a complete application.
4. Ohio EPA announces, through the issuance of a public notice and the proposed draft permit. Applications for a new permit or a permit renewal have a 30-day comment period. Applications for a permit modification have a 45-day comment period. During public notice, the draft permit conditions can be viewed here: http://www.epa.ohio.gov/dsw/pretreatment/cdo_permits.aspx
5. After the comment period, Ohio EPA responds to comments and may hold a meeting with interested parties.
6. The final permit is prepared and issued by Ohio EPA after considering any comments.
7. The application may be denied if the discharge violates any of the prohibited discharges found in [OAC 3745-3-04²](#).

Ohio EPA's performance standard is to take action on indirect discharge permits within 180 days of receiving a *completed* application.

For further information, refer to Ohio EPA's pretreatment program fact sheet titled "Indirect Discharge Permitting Process" at the website [\[insert updated link here\]](#).

What are the typical requirements of an IDP?

Typical requirements include the following:

1. Effluent limitations and monitoring requirements.
2. Procedures for reporting (including noncompliance), resampling, slug loading notification, record keeping, and disposal of residuals.
3. Compliance schedules for treatment system installation and upgrades.

How do I submit my wastewater monitoring information?

Periodic compliance reports must be submitted to Ohio EPA by June 15 and December 15 every year. The submittal process includes data entry into the electronic Discharge Monitoring Records (eDMR) system. To learn how to sign up for eDMR and data entry, please view the Ohio EPA's Electronic Discharge Monitoring Report Submission System webpage: <http://www.epa.ohio.gov/dsw/edmr/eDMR.aspx>.

Industrial users should notify their analytical laboratory of the permit limits so that they can be alerted if an exceedance is detected. If a discharge ever exceeds a daily maximum limit contained in the IDP, the situation must be reported to the discharger's designated [Ohio EPA district office](#) pretreatment representative within 24 hours of being aware of the exceedance. The industrial user must also explain the follow-up remedy actions. In addition, the discharger must complete the "24-hour Notification of Violation of Daily Maximum Pretreatment Standard Form" (Form 4119) to the Ohio EPA district office pretreatment representative and a copy of the form to the Ohio EPA central office.

How long does the permit last?

IDPs are effective for a fixed term not to exceed five years.

How much does the permit cost?

There is an application fee of \$200.00 payable to "Treasurer of the State of Ohio". There is also a permit fee based on the design discharge flow of the facility. Permit fees range from \$0 to \$750. The permit fee does not apply to industrial users eligible for permit-by-rule.

For more information on permit fees, refer to the Ohio EPA document ["Indirect Discharge Fees"](#).

² As of April 2018, Pretreatment Rules (OAC 3745-3) and Indirect Discharge Permit Rules (OAC 3745-36) are undergoing the five-year review process. Prohibited discharges are currently described in OAC 3745-3-04 and are proposed to be duplicated in OAC 3745-36-04.

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By what authority are these permits issued?

These permits are issued under the authority of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 and subsequent amendments (the [Clean Water Act](#)), [Ohio Revised Code Chapter 6111](#), and [OAC 3745-36](#).

What if I have more questions on the indirect discharge permitting process?

You can contact Phoebe Low of the Ohio EPA Division of Surface Water, Pretreatment Unit, at (614) 644-2134 or Phoebe.Low@epa.ohio.gov.

You may also visit Ohio EPA's pretreatment website at: <http://www.epa.ohio.gov/dsw/pretreatment/index.aspx>.