

Illinois Pollution Control Board Sends Proposal to Set Interim Phosphorus Effluent Standard to First Notice

On April 7, 2005, the Illinois Pollution Control Board sent a proposed interim phosphorus effluent standard docket as In the Matter of: Interim Phosphorus Effluent Standard, Proposed New 35 Ill. Adm. Code 304.123(g-k) (R04-26) to first notice. On May 14, 2004, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) proposed the phosphorus effluent standard to limit higher concentrations of phosphorus that may result in detrimental levels of plant and algae growth in waters of the state. Meanwhile, the IEPA and others are in the process of developing scientific information to support a proposal for numeric water quality nutrient standards. The IEPA expects to file a nutrient standards rulemaking proposal with the Board in 2007.

In the rulemaking to establish an interim effluent standard, the IEPA proposes a total phosphorus limit of 1.0 milligram per liter (mg/L) as a monthly average. Generally, the limit would apply to new or expanded discharges from wastewater treatment plants with either a design average flow over 1.0 million gallons per day receiving municipal or domestic waste water, or a total phosphorus effluent load of 25 pounds per day or more for treatment works other than those treating municipal or domestic wastewater. But, the 1.0 mg/L limit would not apply to a source that can demonstrate that phosphorus is not the limiting nutrient in the receiving water or that alternative phosphorus effluent limits are warranted by the aquatic environment in the receiving water.

As proposed, this effluent limit would sunset when the Board adopts a numeric water quality standard for phosphorus. All of these proposed changes would be made to one section of the Board's rules: 35 Ill. Adm. Code 304.123.

Two hearings have already been held in this matter. Opinions and orders of the Board, hearing transcripts, and other documents in rulemaking records are posted on the Board's Web site and may be downloaded from the Web without charge. Hard copies may be obtained for \$.75 per page from the Clerk's office at 312-814-3629, or by writing to the Clerk's office:

Dorothy Gunn, Clerk
Illinois Pollution Control Board
James R. Thompson Center
100 West Randolph Street
Suite 11-500
Chicago, Illinois 60601

For more information contact John Knittle at (217) 278-3111 or email at knittlej@ipcb.state.il.us