



Cambridge Guernsey County Health Department
326 Highland Ave. Cambridge, OH 43725
740-439-3577
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www.guernseycountyhealthdepartment.org

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) Overview

A discharging sewage treatment systems treats and then discharges treated effluent to a stream, ditch or other surface water body. A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) permit must be obtained from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) Division of Surface Water whenever there is a discharge of treated or partially treated water to a surface water of the State. NPDES permits exist to regulate wastewater discharges by placing limitations on the quantity of pollutants that may be discharged and to establish monitoring requirements and other conditions. Federal regulations, Ohio water quality standards and NPDES permits were written to protect public health and the aquatic environment

A homeowner that installs a replacement discharging sewage treatment system, and in limited cases a new discharge on an existing lot, must register for coverage under the general permit by submitting a notice of intent to Ohio EPA along with a registration fee. Certain conditions must be met for the property and discharge to qualify to legally receive NPDES permit coverage. These conditions are found under the "Limitations of Coverage" section of the permit.

In 2010 the Ohio EPA initiated the process of renewing that HSTS General Permit and as part of the process, the Ohio EPA requested field sampling data as required by the permit and maintained by at local health districts as part of the operation and maintenance of the system. This data provides a basis to evaluate how the various HSTS were performing in the field, and to evaluate the performance of the local health districts to manage the program, and to obtain and maintain sample results from permitted discharging systems. The summary of this data and report may be accessed in the following link at 2010 NPDES Sampling Report.



Responsibilities and Requirements for System Owners

1. **Effluent Quality Sampling**-Both General Permits require annual testing of the effluent quality. Systems owners are responsible for ensuring that a sample is collected and reported to the local health district. Samples must be taken in compliance with and meet the effluent monitoring requirements as listed in the General Permits.

Samples must be collected and tested annually for:

- Total Suspended Solids (TSS)
- Ammonia (summer or winter limits-depending on time of year of sample)
- Five Day Carbonaceous Biochemical Oxygen Demand (CBOD)
- Fecal coliform or E. coli
- Chlorine

Annual effluent sample test results **must** be reported to Cambridge-Guernsey County Health Department. We are required to review the results and ensure the system is meeting discharge limits. Cambridge-Guernsey County Health does not collect samples from NPDES systems. The service provider for a system may offer sampling services as part of service contract or a separate service. A fee will most likely be associated with this required service. The service provider will report results to our office. System owners, if unsure, should contact our office to discuss sampling and reporting requirements. **Failure to report annual testing is a violation of the General Permit and Ohio Revised Code 6111 and could result in penalties and loss of coverage under the permit.**

2. **Service Contract for the Discharging System**-The owner of a discharging household sewage treatment system that receives coverage under either General Permit is required to maintain a service contract for the life of the system. ODH approval for these systems and the General Permits' conditions require that a service contract be maintained to ensure that the system operates properly and does not discharge untreated sewage effluent. Cambridge-Guernsey County Health Department is responsible to ensure that system owners maintain a service contract for their system. CGCHD fulfills this obligation through issuance of an operation permit, and may also require a fee. CGCHD will also accept the service provider report in lieu of an inspection conducted by our department.



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Operation and maintenance data for each approved discharging system are listed by manufacturer on the Approved Pretreatment Components page on the ODH website (www.odh.ohio.gov).

3. **Permit Renewal**- By federal law, NPDES permits can only be issued in five year increments and must be renewed to continue coverage. The Operation Permit from our department (CGCHD) is a separate permit that must also be renewed.
4. **Permit Transfer**- If your property changes ownership, you must submit a General Permit Coverage Transfer form to Ohio EPA.

Please contact our office with any questions or concerns at 740-439-3577.

Sincerely,

Ryan Murphy, REHS, RS
Director of Environmental Health
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