

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



NOTICE OF PROPOSED NEW GENERAL PERMIT WQG280000 AUTHORIZING THE DISCHARGE OF WASTES INTO SURFACE WATERS IN THE STATE

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ or commission) is proposing to issue new TCEQ General Permit WQG280000. This new TCEQ general permit proposes to authorize the discharge of, as well as prohibit the discharge of, a variety of waste streams from oil and gas extraction activities defined in the draft general permit as Outer Continental Shelf facilities. The purpose of this new TCEQ general permit is to replace the need for Outer Continental Shelf facilities to obtain individual Texas Railroad Commission permits. The draft general permit applies to offshore oil and gas extraction operations located in the Gulf of Mexico between 3.0 and 10.2 statute miles from the Texas coastline as established in the draft general permit. This is a state-only general permit, and Outer Continental Shelf facilities are required to obtain separate authorization to discharge from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System in addition to obtaining TCEQ authorization to discharge. In addition to any other comments desired to be submitted on the terms and conditions of the draft general permit, TCEQ is specifically seeking public comment on the potential to reduce permitted produced wastewater flows from 7000 barrels per day (0.294 million gallons per day) to 6000 barrels per day (0.252 million gallons per day) which may result in the increase in or removal of certain water quality-based effluent limitations but overall reducing the mass loading of pollutants from produced wastewater discharges as well as establishing compliance schedules for whole effluent toxicity (WET) limitations. General permits are authorized by Texas Water Code, §26.040.

DRAFT GENERAL PERMIT. The executive director has prepared a new draft general permit that proposes to authorize the discharge of, as well as prohibit the discharge of, a variety of waste streams from oil and gas extraction activities defined in the draft general permit as Outer Continental Shelf facilities. No significant degradation of high quality waters is expected and existing uses will be maintained and protected. The executive director proposes to require all dischargers to submit a Notice of Intent to obtain authorization to discharge.

The executive director has reviewed this action for consistency with the goals and policies of the Texas Coastal Management Program (CMP) according to General Land Office regulations and has determined that the action is consistent with applicable CMP goals and policies.

On the date that this notice is published, a copy of the draft general permit and fact sheet will be available for a minimum of 30 days for viewing and copying at the TCEQ Office of the Chief Clerk located at the TCEQ Austin office, at 12100 Park 35 Circle, Building F. These documents will also be available at the TCEQ's 16 regional offices