



Guidance

Dewatering Discharge Notification Guidance

***For the 2022 Construction Stormwater General Permit (2022 CGP)
(Order WQ 2022-0057-DWQ)***

Purpose

Dewatering discharges that may be authorized by the 2022 CGP includes mechanical pumping or syphoning of groundwater from excavations, trenches, foundations, vaults, or similar features related to construction activity and water collected in impoundments (e.g., ponds, puddles, low points on the active site, or other similar accumulation points, baker tanks, and basins) which are then discharged to a water of the United States, tributaries to waters of the United States, or to other conveyance systems such as a municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4). Dewatering discharges must comply with receiving water limitations in Section IV.D of the 2022 CGP and must be absent of pollutants in quantities that threaten to cause pollution or nuisance. Dewatering activities in areas with known soil and/or groundwater contamination are prohibited where that contamination could cause an exceedance of receiving water limitations.

This document sets forth recommended guidance for (1) identifying potentially applicable NPDES permits that may apply instead of the requirements of Attachment J and (2) what information is helpful to include when notifying the Regional Water Board and applicable MS4 operators of anticipated dewatering discharges. Attachment J includes additional requirements not addressed in this guidance document.

Potentially Applicable Dewatering Permits

[Attachment J of the 2022 CGP](#) only authorizes dewatering discharges to a water of the United States (either directly or through a conveyance) at construction sites that are **not** subject to another National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for dewatering activities required by the State or applicable Regional Water Board.

The following table lists potentially applicable NPDES permits required by the State or Regional Water Boards for dewatering discharges as of the date staff prepared this guidance. There may be other applicable permits that regulate dewatering discharges and dischargers should confirm whether additional permits have been adopted since this guidance was published. If applicable, dischargers **must** comply with the requirements in the applicable permit, and Attachment J does not apply. Check with your Regional Water Board to determine the applicable permit and regulatory requirements.



Table 1. Potentially Applicable NPDES Permits for Dewatering Discharges

Water Board	Potentially Applicable Permits
North Coast Regional Water Board (Region 1)	• R1-2015-0003 – General NPDES Permit for Low Threat Discharges • R1-2011-0028 – Treated Groundwater Petroleum Hydrocarbon & Volatile Organic Compound
San Francisco Bay Regional Water Board (Region 2)	• R2-2017-0048 – Volatile Organic Compound and Fuel General Permit
Central Coast Regional Water Board (Region 3)	• R3-2022-0035 – General NPDES Permit for Limited-Threat Discharges
Los Angeles Regional Water Board (Region 4)	• R4-2018-0086 – Treated Groundwater and Petroleum Fuel Pollution • R4-2023-0429 – Groundwater from Construction and Project Dewatering
Central Valley Regional Water Board (Region 5)	• R5-2022-0006 – Limited Threat Discharges to Surface Water
Lahontan Regional Water Board (Region 6)	• R6T-2010-0024 – Treated Groundwater • R6T-2014-0049 – Limited Threat Discharges to Surface Water
Colorado River Basin Regional Water Board (Region 7)	• R7-2015-0007 – Extracted and Treated Groundwater • R7-2015-0006 – Low Threat Discharges
Santa Ana Regional Water Board (Region 8)	• R8-2020-0006 – De Minimis Threat Discharges (regionwide) • R8-2019-0061 – De Minimis Discharges, Groundwater Dewatering Operations, and/or Groundwater Cleanup/Remediation Operations within Newport Bay Watershed
San Diego Regional Water Board (Region 9)	• R9-2015-0013 – Groundwater Extraction Discharges
State Water Board	• 2014-0174-DWQ – Utility Vaults (Statewide)

Attachment J Dewatering Discharge Notifications

For those dewatering discharges subject to Attachment J, Section D.1 requires dischargers notify, via email, the applicable Regional Water Board stormwater staff of the anticipated dewatering discharge at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the dewatering discharge. A separate notification is required if there are changes to the dewatering activities. The general stormwater staff email addresses for each Regional Water Board may be found in [Attachment C of the 2022 CGP](#).

In addition, as set forth in Attachment J, Section D.2, the discharger is required to notify the Regional Water Board **and** applicable MS4 operator within 24 hours of a discharge occurring when, (1) the dewatering discharge occurs to protect human life and health or prevent severe property damage, or (2) the discharger is unable to stop a dewatering discharge that exceeds pH and turbidity numeric action levels.

The discharger should consider including the following information when notifying the Regional Water Board:

Subject: [WDID] – Dewatering Discharge Notification

Dewatering Discharge Details:

- Location of Construction Site: (e.g. Address/Corner Streets, City)
- Potentially Affected Receiving Water(s):
- Discharges to Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System: (Yes or No, [MS4 name])
- Site Contact: (e.g., [Name], [Role], [Phone Number])
- Date/Time of Discharge: (e.g., December 8, 2024, from 7:00am – 11:00am; weekly between January 1, 2024 – March 31, 2024, starting at 7:00am)
- Frequency of Discharge: (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, one-time, etc.)
- Source and Type of Non-Potable Water: (e.g., uncontaminated groundwater, etc.)
- Characteristics of Dewatering Discharge: (e.g., pH, turbidity, other pollutants)
- Estimated Volume/Discharge Rate of Dewatering Discharge: (e.g., 900 gallons, 5 gpm)
- Brief Summary of Reason for Dewatering Discharge:
- Brief Description Dewatering Best Management Practices Being Implemented:

The above Dewatering Discharge Details may also be used to satisfy section D.3 of Attachment J if, as that section requires, they are incorporated into the on-site Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) 24-hours prior to discharge and the updated SWPPP is uploaded to the Stormwater Multiple Application and Reports Tracking System (SMARTS) within 14 days following the discharge.

This Guidance Document was last updated on July 30, 2024.