

Guidance on Complying with the Applicable Requirements of NCG01

In a memorandum dated July 14, 2008, the North Carolina Division of Water Quality (NCDWQ) informed the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) of the requirements applicable to their activities covered under the NCG01 general permit. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on complying with the applicable requirements of the NCG01. This document will provide definitions of terms, specific details on monitoring and recordkeeping, and recommendations to maintain compliance with the NCG01. This guidance is applicable only to the current NCG01 general permit. Should revisions be made to the NCG01 general permit when it is renewed, a new guidance document will be issued reflecting those revisions.

Definitions

303(d) listed stream – Streams listed on the 303(d) impaired waters list are required to be inspected twice a week. This requirement applies only to streams listed for pollutants associated with construction activities such as turbidity, sediment, or biological integrity and included on DWQ's Construction 303(d) list. Unnamed tributaries draining to the impaired stream reach are assumed to carry the 303(d) listing as well.

Idle projects – Idle projects are projects that have not been completed but where no construction activity occurs for 21 calendar days or more and have been adequately stabilized with temporary vegetation pursuant to Division of Land Resources guidelines. Typically, these projects are two-part projects (grading and paving) with significant gaps between activities or where the project has been stabilized with temporary ground cover and construction has been halted due to weather, funding, or other constraints.

Pollutants for visual inspection

Clarity – Clarity refers to the clarity of the stormwater discharge and can range from clear to opaque or very cloudy.

Floating Solids – Floating solids are any solids, foams, or debris observed floating on the surface of the stormwater discharge.

Suspended Solids – Suspended solids is the type of pollution most often associated with construction activities. This term refers to suspended sediment or other particles in the discharge. This also includes sediment that was once suspended and has been deposited outside the limits of the work site.

Oil Sheen – Oil sheen refers to the shiny or colored luster that result from petrochemicals in the discharge.

Other Obvious Indicators of Stormwater Pollution – This could be anything not listed above such as de-icing material, slag, industrial pollutants, etc.

Stormwater Discharge Outfall (SDO) – A SDO is defined as a point of stormwater discharge to waters of the State (streams, wetlands, open water). An outfall is not restricted to pipes and includes any type of conveyance or any discharge from a BMP that discharges to waters of the State.

Monitoring and Recordkeeping

- All SDOs shall be inspected once every seven calendar days [twice every seven calendar days for 303(d) listed streams (see definition above)] or within 24 hours after a 0.5” rainfall per 24 hour period. It is recommended that outfalls or discharges from BMPs not discharging to waters of the State be monitored and maintained regularly. This is highly recommended for discharges located adjacent to sensitive areas such as adjacent landowners or those that are in close proximity to waters of the State.

SDOs on idle projects (See definition above) may be inspected less frequently. The inspection frequency shall not be less than once every 14 calendar days (once every seven calendar days for 303(d) listed streams). However, SDOs on inactive projects must be inspected within 24 hours after a 0.5” rainfall per 24 hour period.

- Inspections of SDOs shall include observing the discharge from the outfall if there is discharge present and making a qualitative assessment of the discharge for clarity, floating solids, suspended solids, oil sheen, and other obvious indicators of stormwater pollution. Qualitative assessment of the discharge includes visually observing the outfall at a point just prior to discharging to waters of the State for the parameters listed above. The qualitative assessment shall be made before the discharge joins or is diluted by any other waste stream, body of water, or substance. Samples of the discharge at the SDO are not required.

Results of the inspections shall be recorded for each SDO. NCDWQ has provided a recommended method on its website for qualitatively assessing the discharge using a numerical scale. However, NCDOT may develop and submit to NCDWQ for approval, its own method for qualitatively assessing the discharge. The method should clearly describe the range of values, should be comparable to NCDWQ’s recommended method, and should be used consistently in all of the NCDOT Division Offices.

- If visible sedimentation is leaving NCDOT property, regardless of whether it is from a SDO or not, corrective actions shall be taken to control the discharge of sediments outside of NCDOT’s property. Events where sediment leaves the NCDOT property limits shall be documented in the records along with the corrective actions taken and when the situation was resolved. Any event where sediment leaves the NCDOT property limits or where pollutants are discharged to waters of the State shall be reported to the appropriate offices of NCDWQ and NCDLR within 24 hours of first knowledge of the occurrence. NCDWQ shall be consulted regarding appropriate clean-up techniques for any loss of pollutants to waters of the State or protected buffer areas.

- Rainfall shall be monitored and recorded everyday. A rain gage shall be maintained on each construction site. It is recommended that at least one rain gage per 3 miles of roadway be maintained on each site unless topographical conditions (e.g., mountains) necessitate more gages. The State Climate Office of North Carolina Multi-sensor Precipitation Estimate (MPE) or other approved remote sensing precipitation tools may be substituted for rain gages and used to monitor daily rainfall and to trigger inspections due to a 0.5” or greater rainfall event.

- At a minimum, inspection records shall include the following:
 - Daily rainfall amounts (record zero if no rain fell), identification of each discharge outfall inspected, date and time of the inspection, name and signature of the person performing the inspection, indication of characteristics of the stormwater discharge (clarity, floating solids, suspended solids, oil sheen, etc.), description of other indicators of stormwater pollution, indication of visible sediment leaving the NCDOT property limits or entering waters of the State, actions taken to correct/prevent sedimentation outside the NCDOT property limits or in waters of the State, and when the action was completed.
 - For visible sedimentation found outside the NCDOT property limits, inspection records must include an explanation as to the actions taken to control future releases, actions taken to clean up the sediment that has left the NCDOT property limits, and when the action was completed.