

Meeting Summary
Joint Meeting of the Water Quality Advisory Work Group (WQAWG) and the Water Quality
Standards Work Group (WQSWG) to Address Thermal Discharge Issues
October 16, 2017 - 5th Meeting

All information presented in this document is a compilation of TCEQ staff notes and is not a transcript of the meeting; inadvertent errors and/or unintentional omissions of information may exist in this document. Any information cited should be verified by the user.

Location: Building E, Agenda Room 201S (webcast available)

Time: 1:30 am

Action Items

- Create standard default language for thermal plume Other Requirement language.
- Input on how to calculate the limits; come up with way to calculate limits.
- Determine whether to include any daily average requirements.
- Request for cooling water impoundment example.
- Create option to delineate thermal wastestreams in the industrial permit application.
- Add to industrial application- question on whether the facility discharges to a cooling water impoundment.
- Delineate thermal wastestreams in application.
- Resolve procedure for expressing thermal limits (whether we should calculate them as loading limits).
- Receive comments on this draft by November 20th.
- Provide reminder/ email for stakeholders to request more examples of scenarios.
- Applicant should propose sampling procedures/ frequency to the agency and we will consider it on a case by case basis. (Request for comments on this policy)
- Further address the issue how the TCEQ will approach discharges that have a small thermal wastestream that does not increase overall temperature of commingled discharge.
- Resolve the default temperature assumption/ get it approved (right now 30.5 C)

Q & A

Q1: How will the TCEQ account for more dramatic temperature differences in the winter?

A1: The TCEQ thinks that the heated thermal water will also be colder/ there will be less of it. TCEQ is aware of and considering the thermal spawning cues that may be impacted in the winter.

Q2: Can we use SWCM database for site-specific data?

A2: Yes, as a 2nd tier approach if it is determined that it is needed.

Q3: Is it appropriate to use the 8% default value on channels that have lots of advective water flow (i.e. like the Houston Ship Channel)?

A3: The primary approach would be to use 8%, but the a 2nd tier approach may be applicable if proven by the permittee.

Q4: Why the shift from daily average to daily max?

A4: It is in accordance with the standards and seems more appropriate from a regulatory standpoint.

Q5: Will the thermal max be calculated as a flow-weighted daily max?

A5: No, it will be a true daily max.

Q6: What is the definition of 'summer months'?

A6: June through August. (Request for comments on this definition as it is not the same as in SWCM).

Q5: Will a full toxic radius be applicable to the thermal discharge?

A5: It may not be, the facility will have to prove that the full radius does not apply. We will have a default language for the mixing zone, but are open to site-specific mixing zones if needed.

Q6: What percent of 'utility wastewater' needs to be thermal wastewater to classify as 'thermal'?

A6: It will depend/ TBD. Right now, if it is less than 10% thermal wastewater it is generally not considered 'thermal.'

Q7: Will the facilities need to determine the temperature of each wastestream prior to commingling to determine whether they have a thermal component/ if the overall discharge does not have a temperature differential?

A7: TCEQ needs to address this issue further. In some situations the temperature discharge may not apply. If you have a small portion of a heated wastestream that does not heat the overall discharge, it will not require a thermal limit.

Q8: When will the procedure become effective?

A8: TCEQ is unsure, but planning to submit a procedure to EPA by early next year.

Comments

1. Daily max will be tough for facilities to meet. It is a departure from typical policy.