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## State NPDES Authority Statutes:

*Montana*



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# A National Agricultural Law Center Research Publication

## State NPDES Authority Statutes: Montana

### [MCA 75-5-201](#)

### [MCA 75-5-401](#)

*Current through the 2022 legislative session.*

#### **§ 75-5-201. Rules Authorized.**

(1)

(a) The department shall, except as provided in 75-5-411 and subject to the provisions of 75-5-203, adopt rules for the administration of this chapter.

(b) The department shall adopt rules that describe the location and the times of the year when suction dredging is permissible. These rules may be adopted only after consultation with the local conservation districts in the areas subject to the rule.

(2) The department's rules may include a fee schedule or system for assessment of administrative penalties as provided under 75-5-611.

#### **§ 75-5-401. Rules for Permits – Ground Water Exclusions.**

(1) Except as provided in subsection (5), the department shall adopt rules:

(a) governing application for permits to discharge sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes into state waters, including rules requiring the filing of plans and specifications relating to the construction, modification, or operation of disposal systems;

(b) governing the issuance, denial, modification, or revocation of permits. The department may not require a permit for a water conveyance structure or for a natural spring if the water discharged to state waters does not contain industrial waste, sewage, or other wastes. Discharge to surface water of ground water that is not altered from its ambient quality does not constitute a discharge requiring a permit under this part if:

(i) the discharge does not contain industrial waste, sewage, or other wastes;

(ii) the water discharged does not cause the receiving waters to exceed applicable standards for any parameters; and

(iii) to the extent that the receiving waters in their ambient state exceed standards for any parameters, the discharge does not increase the concentration of the parameters.



(c) governing authorization to discharge under a general permit for storm water associated with construction activity. These rules must allow an owner or operator to notify the department of the intent to be covered under the general permit. This notice of intent must include a signed pollution prevention plan that requires the applicant to implement best management practices in accordance with the general permit. The rules must authorize the owner or operator to discharge under the general permit on receipt of the notice and plan by the department.

(2) The rules must allow the issuance or continuance of a permit only if the department finds that operation consistent with the limitations of the permit will not result in pollution of any state waters, except that the rules may allow the issuance of a temporary permit under which pollution may result if the department ensures that the permit contains a compliance schedule designed to meet all applicable effluent standards and water quality standards in the shortest reasonable period of time.

(3) The rules must provide that the department may revoke a permit if the department finds that the holder of the permit has violated its terms, unless the department also finds that the violation was accidental and unforeseeable and that the holder of the permit corrected the condition resulting in the violation as soon as was reasonably possible.

(4) The department may adopt rules governing reclamation of sites disturbed by construction, modification, or operation of permitted activities for which a bond is voluntarily filed by a permittee pursuant to 75-5-405, including rules for the establishment of criteria and procedures governing release of the bond or other surety and release of portions of a bond or other surety.

(5) Discharges of sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes into state ground waters from the following activities or operations are not subject to the ground water permit requirements adopted under subsections (1) through (4):

- (a) discharges or activities at wells injecting fluids associated with oil and gas exploration and production regulated under the federal underground injection control program;
- (b) disposal by solid waste management systems licensed pursuant to 75-10-221;
- (c) individuals disposing of their own normal household wastes on their own property;
- (d) hazardous waste management facilities permitted pursuant to 75-10-406;
- (e) water injection wells, reserve pits, and produced water pits used in oil and gas field operations and approved pursuant to Title 82, chapter 11;
- (f) agricultural irrigation facilities;
- (g) storm water disposal or storm water detention facilities;
- (h) subsurface disposal systems for sanitary wastes serving individual residences;
- (i) in situ mining of uranium facilities controlled under Title 82, chapter 4, part 2;



(j) mining operations subject to operating permits or exploration licenses in compliance with The Strip and Underground Mine Reclamation Act, Title 82, chapter 4, part 2, or the metal mine reclamation laws, Title 82, chapter 4, part 3; or

(k) projects reviewed under the provisions of the Montana Major Facility Siting Act, Title 75, chapter 20.

(6) Notwithstanding the provisions of 75-5-301(4), mixing zones for activities excluded from permit requirements under subsection (5) of this section must be established by the permitting agency for those activities in accordance with 75-5-301(4)(a) through (4)(c).

(7) Notwithstanding the exclusions set forth in subsection (5), any excluded source that the department determines may be causing or is likely to cause violations of ground water quality standards may be required to submit monitoring information pursuant to 75-5-602.

(8) The department may adopt rules identifying other activities or operations from which a discharge of sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes into state ground waters is not subject to the ground water permit requirements adopted under subsections (1) through (4).

(9) The department may adopt rules authorizing general permits for categories of point source discharges. The rules may authorize discharge upon issuance of an individual authorization by the department or upon receipt of a notice of intent to be covered under the general permit.

