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NPDES Vessels Program *Quarterly*

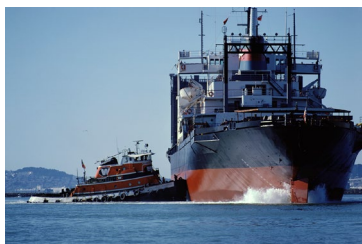
NAVIGATING THE EPA REGULATED VESSELS UNIVERSE

Draft 2013 VGP and sVGP Now Available

The draft 2013 Vessel General Permit (VGP) and Small Vessel General Permit (sVGP) are now available at <http://www.epa.gov/npdes/vessels>. The proposed permits would help protect the nation's waters from ship-borne pollutants and reduce the risk of introduction of invasive species from ballast water discharges.

Overview of the 2013 VGP

The VGP is a Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit that authorizes, on a nationwide basis, discharges incidental to the normal operation of non-military and non-recreational vessels greater than or equal to 79 feet in length. If finalized, the draft 2013 VGP would replace the current VGP, which was issued in December 2008 and expires on December 19, 2013.



The 2013 draft VGP would continue to regulate 26 specific discharge categories that were contained in the 2008 VGP, and for the first time, would manage

the discharge of fish hold effluent (which is exempt from having to obtain a permit until December 8, 2013). Most notably, the draft 2013 VGP contains numeric ballast water discharge limits for most vessels, which would reduce the successful establishment of aquatic nuisance species. The draft permit contains more stringent effluent limits for oil to sea interfaces and exhaust gas scrubber washwater. EPA is also seeking comment on potentially more stringent requirements for bilgewater discharges. Additionally, the updated permit would reduce the administrative burden for vessel owners and operators by eliminating duplicative reporting requirements, clarifying that electronic recordkeeping may be used instead of paper records, and streamlining self-inspection requirements for vessels that are out of service for extended periods.

Overview of the 2013 sVGP

The draft 2013 sVGP would be the first under the Clean Water Act, if finalized, to address discharges incidental to the normal operation of non-military and non-recreational vessels less than 79 feet in length.

The draft permit specifies best management practices for several broad discharge management categories including fuel management, engine and oil control, solid and liquid maintenance, graywater management, fish hold effluent management, and ballast water management. The permit would go into effect at the conclusion of a current moratorium enacted by Congress that exempts all incidental discharges from such vessels, with the exception of ballast water, from having to obtain a permit until December 18, 2013.

To learn more about the NPDES vessels program, please visit <http://www.epa.gov/npdes/vessels>. For information on the VGP, please e-mail VGP@epa.gov. For information on the sVGP, please e-mail sVGP@epa.gov.

HOW TO SUBMIT COMMENTS FOR THE DRAFT PERMITS

EPA will accept comment on the proposed permits for 75 days after the *Federal Register* notice announcing the proposed permits is published. EPA seeks the views of the interested public on requirements currently contained in the draft VGP and sVGP (and the accompanying fact sheets and economic analyses), and any changes or additions recommended for the final 2013 VGP and sVGP. Comments for the draft VGP should go to Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2011-0141 and comments for the draft sVGP should go to EPA-HQ-OW-2011-150.

Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

1. Online at <http://www.regulations.gov>; Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
2. Email ow-docket@epa.gov
3. Mail to: Water Docket, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Mail Code: 2822T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington DC 20460 Attention Docket ID No: EPA-HQ-OW-2011-{place appropriate number here}.

Such deliveries are only accepted during the docket's normal hours of operation, and special arrangements should be made for deliveries of boxed information.

ONE TIME REPORT SYSTEM NOW AVAILABLE



In October, the one time report electronic system was made available at <http://www.epa.gov/npdes/vessels/vesselsreporting.cfm>

The 2008 VGP requires owner/operators to submit a one time report that contains basic information about the vessel between the 30th and 36th month of permit coverage. EPA strongly recommends that owner/operators use the electronic system to submit their reports since it will reduce the processing time needed to complete one time reports for most permittees. The one time report is due February 6, 2012 for those vessels that had coverage on or before September 19, 2009.

For questions about using the one time report system, please visit <http://www.epa.gov/npdes/vessels/vesselsreporting.cfm> or contact the NOI Processing Center at noi@avanticorporation.com or 1-866-352-7755 (8:00 am – 5:00 pm EST).

UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS AND WEBCASTS



EPA will hold several public meetings and webcasts on the draft VGP and sVGP. The focus of each meeting and webcast will be to present the proposed requirements of the VGP and the sVGP and the basis for those requirements, as well as to answer questions concerning the draft permits. The dates and locations of the public meetings and webcasts are as follows:

Public Meetings

- January 11, 2012, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm (EST) or until all comments have been heard at EPA East Room 1153, 1201 Constitution Ave NW, Washington DC 20460
- January 23, 2012, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm (CST) or until all comments have been heard at Ralph H. Metcalfe Federal Building, Room 331, 77 West Jackson Blvd, Chicago IL 60604

Webcast

- Mid – Late January, exact date to be determined.

Dependent upon public interest, EPA may schedule additional meetings and/or webcasts. Information on additional sessions and registration for scheduled public meetings and webcasts will be available at <http://www.epa.gov/npdes/vessels>