



Fact Sheet

State and Tribal Water Quality Standards: Notice of EPA Approvals and Announcement of EPA Internet Repository

Summary

*The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is publishing a **Federal Register** notice listing state and tribal water quality standards EPA approved during the period beginning on April 1, 1998 and ending on May 30, 2000. Additionally, this notice lists Indian Tribes that obtained EPA approval to administer a water quality standards program, as well as EPA actions to promulgate or remove federal water quality standards during the same period. This is the last such notice published in the **Federal Register**. EPA's notice of approvals is being replaced by an Internet repository of federal, state and tribal Clean Water Act-effective water quality standards which can be found at EPA's web site at <http://www.epa.gov/ost/wqs>. In addition, each of EPA's Regional offices will be maintaining hard copy repositories of effective state and tribal water quality standards.*

Background

In accordance with a requirement formerly contained at 40 CFR 131.21(d), EPA has periodically published **Federal Register** notices listing Agency approvals of state and tribal water quality standards to inform the public of recent Agency actions on water quality standards. The most recent list was published October 7, 1998, reflecting EPA state and tribal submissions of new or revised water quality standards approved by EPA from September 1, 1995 to March 31, 1998. Due to recent changes in EPA's water quality standards regulations (commonly referred to as the *Alaska Rule*), this will be the last list of water quality standard approvals published as a **Federal Register** notice.

The *Alaska Rule* (published in the **Federal Register** on April 27, 2000 and effective as of May 30, 2000) requires that new and revised state and tribal water quality standards be approved by EPA before they become effective for Clean Water Act purposes. Before the *Alaska Rule*, water quality standards were Clean Water Act-effective once they were adopted by states and authorized tribes, regardless of EPA approval. The new regulations also replace the requirement for an annual publication of EPA standards approvals with the establishment of a repository of all Clean Water Act-effective water quality standards (referred to as the Clean Water Act Water Quality Standards Docket in the *Alaska Rule* preamble). Because this repository will contain the complete and actual text of effective state and tribal water quality standards, EPA believes it will be more informative than the periodic notices of EPA approvals.

Today's Action

In accordance with the previous water quality standards regulation provision contained at 40 CFR 131.21(d), EPA is publishing in the **Federal Register** a final notice listing new or revised state and tribal water quality standards that EPA approved from April 1, 1998 to May 30, 2000.

For each EPA approval action, the notice provides a reference to the state or tribal regulation containing the complete water quality standards; the date of state or tribal adoption and/or effectiveness; the date of EPA approval; and a brief description of EPA's approval. Additionally, this notice contains a list of tribes that have obtained EPA approval to administer a water quality standards program. It also contains a listing of federal water quality standards rulemakings.

The **Federal Register** notice does not include the following information:

- the actual text of the water quality standards;
- any exceptions or conditions that apply to EPA's approval, such as portions of the state and tribal standards submissions on which EPA did not take action or EPA disapproved;
- whether approvals were made subject to the results of consultation under the Endangered Species Act;
- tribal application materials submitted to EPA for authorization to administer the water quality standards program; or
- the text of the federal water quality standards rulemakings.

As part of today's action, EPA is announcing the availability of an Internet repository for all water quality standards effective under the Clean Water Act. The public may view the effective federal, state and tribal water quality standards at <http://www.epa.gov/ost/wqs>. This Internet repository will be updated periodically to include new and revised water quality standards approved by EPA in the future. EPA Regional offices will continue to maintain hard copies of the effective water quality standards of the states and authorized tribes within their region. You may view the hard copy water quality standards documents by contacting the water quality standards coordinator in the appropriate EPA Regional office (See "EPA Regional Water Quality Standards Contacts" table in the **Federal Register** notice).

Additional Information

For additional information concerning this notice, contact Cara Lalley at EPA Headquarters (1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, Mail Code 4305, Washington, DC 20460; (202) 260-0314; lalley.cara@epa.gov), or the water quality standards coordinator in the appropriate EPA Regional office. You may also view this **Federal Register** notice on the Internet at: <http://www.epa.gov/OST/standards>. The notice gives complete information on how to obtain additional information.