



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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Public hearings scheduled to gather comments on revised water quality standards

RALEIGH – Proposed revisions to state water quality standards, including the benchmarks the state uses to evaluate metals, will be the subject of two public hearings conducted this month by the N.C. Environmental Management Commission.

The proposed new standards are part of the federally-required Triennial Review of Surface Water Quality Standards.

The proposed new standards would change how the state measures environmental impacts of certain metals. They include changing some standards from total recoverable metal concentrations to dissolved metal concentrations. In most cases, measuring dissolved metal concentrations more accurately describes how the metal affects aquatic organisms. In the practical application of standards for use in permits, variations in hardness in the state's waters can affect the solubility of metals in waterways and affect how the standards are incorporated into permits for industrial and wastewater treatment discharges. Therefore, the proposed standards revisions take into consideration the hardness of the water in the streams receiving the permitted discharge. The proposed revisions are in line with nationally recommended water quality guidance.

An informative summary of the proposed changes for surface water quality standards is available on the N.C. Division of Water Resources' website at: <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/wq/ps/csu/swtirev>.

The hearings are scheduled for:

- July 15 at 2 p.m. in the Ground Floor Hearing Room, Archdale Building, 512 North Salisbury St., Raleigh
- July 16 at 3 p.m. in the Statesville Civic Center, 300 South Center St., Statesville

Oral and written comments may be presented at the public hearings. Written comments may also be sent by mail to: Connie Brower, DENR Division of Water Resources / Water Planning Section, 1611 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, N.C. 27699-1611. Comments can also be emailed to: DWR-Classifications-Standards@ncdenr.gov. The comment period ends at 5 p.m. Aug. 22.

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