State of Washington Department of Ecology

WASTEWATER TREATMENT COMPLIANCE INSPECTION REPORT

Central Regional Office
1250 W Alder ST
Union Gap, WA 98903
ph: (509) 575-2490
fax: (509) 575-2809
(rev. 7-17-18)

Section A: General Information

Report Version	PERMIT #	mm/dd/yy	Inspection Type	Inspector Code	Facility Type
☒ New ☐ Changed ☐ Deleted	**ST0009263**	02/21/24	C	S	☒ Industrial ○ Public ⊙ Private

Remarks

N/A

Inspection work days	Facility Self-Monitoring	Photos Taken	Samples Taken	BI	QA
1.0		☒ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☒ No	N	N

Lead Ecology Inspector(s)
Stephanie Giesin

Section B: Facility Data

Name, Location, and Phone of Facility Inspected
Mercer Wine Estates LLC
3100 Lee Rd
Prosser, WA 99350

Entry Time: 10:56 AM
Permit Effective Date: 10/1/2019
Exit Time: 12:05 PM
Permit Expiration Date: 9/30/2024

Name(s)/Title(s) of On-Site Representative(s)
Sean Kendall – General Manager
Sam Elliot – Sampling technician

Ecology Staff On-Site
Stephanie Giesin – Permit Developer/Permit Manager
Lucy Cornejo – Winery General Permit Manager
Andrea Jedel – Industrial Unit Supervisor

Name, Address, Title, Phone, and Fax Number of Responsible Official
Sean Kendall
3100 Lee Rd
Prosser, WA 99350

Phone Number (509) 832-3441 Fax N/A Contacted? ☒ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Other Facility Data
N/A

Section C: Areas Evaluated During Inspection (Check only those areas evaluated)

☒	Permit	☐	Flow Measurement	☒	Operations & Maintenance	☐	CSO/SSO (Sewer Overflow)
☒	Records/Reports	☐	Effluent Receiving Water	☐	Sludge Handling/Disposal	☐	Pollution Prevention
☒	Facility Site Review	☐	Compliance Schedules	☐	Pretreatment	☐	Multimedia
☐	Self-Monitoring Program	☒	Laboratory	☐	Storm Water	☐	Other

Section D: Summary of Findings/Comments

The purpose of this inspection was to follow up on recommendations for pH sampling at the facility and to introduce new Ecology staff to some of the wastewater industries we manage. The last inspection for this facility was on January 4, 2023. Mercer Wine has an active State Waste Discharge (SWD) permit to discharge wastewater to the Prosser POTW.

Andrea, Lucy, and I (Stephanie) arrived at the facility at 10:56 AM. We met Sean in his office and did introductions for Lucy Cornejo, our Winery General Permit Manager, and Andrea Jedel, our Industrial Unit Supervisor. I explained we have had changes in our technical unit and we are now broken into two units, the Municipal Unit and the Industrial Unit. I said I wanted to follow up to see how their pH sampling was going since our recommendation was given at the last inspection. The last pH violation was in February 2023. Sean said that the sampling values they are getting from sampling and the values from the

City are not that much different. I told Sean we would want to stick with the standard methods addressed in the permit for each sample. Sampling pH is a grab sample and all other parameters that are measured use 24-hour composite sampling or calculation. Each time there would be a pH violation they would look over different areas in their processing system to determine which areas would be attributed to the violation and they were unable to find an answer.

Sean took us through the facility, and we stopped at two of their filter processing equipment before we went outside to the crush pad. They have a pad filtration which uses filter pads in between each black plate and collects undesirable solids as they pass through the filter pads. They still use the pad filtration system for smaller batches. The Oenoflow XL uses small straw-like filters, which are more efficient for removing undesirable solids. The system is automated and shows the flow rate and gallons per minute. This system will shut itself off and clean itself as needed to process the wine before it is bottled. Wine is processed through the Oenoflow XL a few days before bottling.

He walked us through the process of grapes coming into the facility. There are valves on the drains to divert wastewater to the POTW when they are processing grapes and stormwater can be diverted to the stormwater pond behind the building when they are not processing. The lees tank collects the solid sediment from the crushing process. Natural Selection Farms comes to pick up their solid waste from the lees tank and it is used for cattle feed.

From there we walked to their original barrel room which is attached to the tasting room. Sean said they pressure wash the barrels once a year. They have an additional barrel room for more capacity. Then Sean took us into the lab to show us how they monitor and sample pH. There is a sheet with their pH readings that Sam collects and analyses with their pH probe. They have a laminated standard operating procedure (SOP) and a photo of where wastewater is sampled from outside at their sump. I asked if they keep records of when they have calibrated the pH probe. Sam said they do not, but they could start doing that. The permit and standard methods state how sampling is conducted and how records are to be kept.

We saw the bottling process in the bottling room. Sean said they use 180° pressurized water to clean them. He showed us the aluminum bottling machine they have that was used for a small project, which they are no longer using.

We walked outside the back of the facility to see the stormwater pond, sump, and sampling equipment used by the city. The sump is where pH samples are taken using a cup with a long arm to obtain samples before they are analyzed in the lab.

We went back inside to see the winery tanks and cleaning bin kits used to clean the winery tanks. The cleaning process uses hot water, contact time, and chemicals. Sean said they clean the valves on the tanks once/twice a year. Sean showed us a tank that is used outside to collect the grapes where they are destemmed creating a “must”. He went over how grape skins are cleaned out of a winery tank with the upper racking door.

We thanked Sean for his time and left the facility at 12:05 pm.

The last updated Operations and Maintenance (O&M) manual was received before the pH sampling change was made at the facility. The O&M manual should be updated to include the SOP for pH sampling.

Photos:

Pad filter

Oenoflow hose going to floor drain

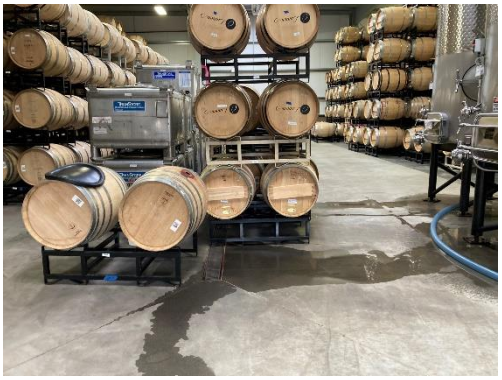
Oenoflow XL filtering system

Straw like filter

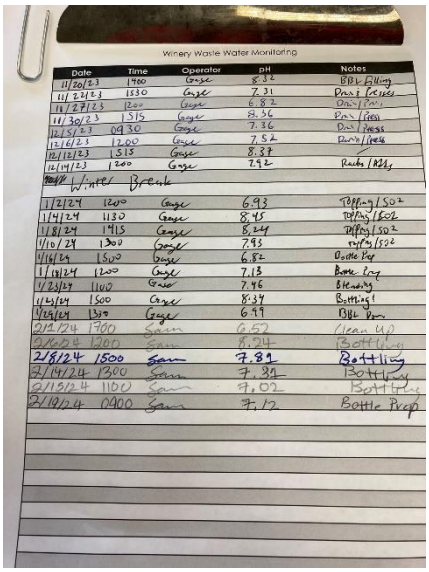
Crush pad

Lees tank

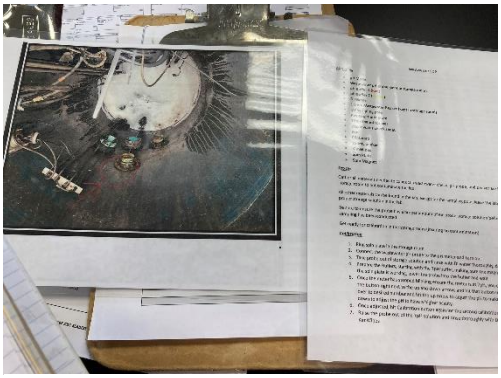
Original barrel room attached to tasting room



Additional barrel room



pH sampling data



pH sampling SOP and sampling photo

pH probe – photo taken by Sam

Bottling Room

Aluminum bottling

Stormwater pond

Sump – pH sample taken here

City sampler

Cleaning bin kit for winery tanks

Winery tank and floor drain

Grape destemming tank

Name(s) and Signatures of Inspector(s)	Agency/Office/Telephone	Date
Stephanie Giesin	WA Dept. of Ecology, CRO, (509) 504-0172	2/22/2024
Name and Signature of Management QA Reviewer	**Agency/Office/Telephone**	**Date**
Andrea Jedel	WA Dept. of Ecology, CRO, (509) 961-0625	2/23/24

ANNOUNCED Inspection

Section A: General Information

Report Version: N for 1st version, **C** for Changed or amended, or **D** for Delete

NPDES Permit No.: Enter the facility's NPDES or State permit number.

Inspection Date: Insert the date entry was made into the facility. Use the month/day/year format (e.g.,06/30/04 = June 30, 2004).

Inspection Type: Use one of the codes listed below to describe the type of inspection:

A Performance Audit	L Enforcement Case Support	2 IU Sampling Inspection
B Compliance Biomonitoring	M Multimedia	3 IU Non-Sampling Inspection
C Compliance Evaluation (non-sampling)	P Pretreatment Compliance Inspection	4 IU Toxics Inspection
D Diagnostic	R Reconnaissance	5 IU Sampling Inspection with Pretreatment
E Corps of Engineers Inspection	S Compliance Sampling	6 IU Non-Sampling Inspection with pretreatment
F Pretreatment Follow-up	U IU Inspection with Pretreatment Audit	7 IU Toxics with Pretreatment
G Pretreatment Audit	X Toxics Inspection	
I Industrial User (IU) Inspection	Z Sludge	

Inspector Code: Use one of the codes listed below to describe the *lead agency* in the inspection:

C - Contractor or Other Inspectors (Specify in Remarks Columns)	N - NEIC Inspectors
E - Corps of Engineers	R - EPA Regional Inspector
J - Joint EPA/State Inspectors - EPA Lead	S - State Inspector
	T - Joint State/EPA Inspectors - State Lead

Facility Type: Use of one of the choices below to describe the facility.
1 - Municipal. Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTWs) with 1987 Standard Industrial Code (SIC) 4952.
2 - Industrial. Other than municipal, agricultural, and Federal facilities.
3 - Agricultural. Facilities classified with 1987 SIC 0111 to 0971.
4 - Federal. Facilities identified as Federal by the EPA Regional Office

Remarks: These columns are reserved for remarks.

Inspection Work Days.: Estimate the total work effort (to the nearest 0.1 work day), up to 99.9 days, that were used to complete the inspection. This estimate includes the accumulative effort of all participating inspectors; any effort for laboratory analyses, testing, travel time and preparation time. This estimate does not require detailed documentation.

Facility Evaluation Rating: Use information gathered during the inspection (regardless of inspection type) to evaluate the quality of the facility self-monitoring program. Grade the program using a scale of 1 to 5 with a score of 5 being used for very reliable self-monitoring programs, 3 being satisfactory, and 1 being used for very unreliable programs.

Biomonitoring Information. Enter D for static testing. Enter F for flow through testing. Enter N for no biomonitoring.

Quality Assurance Data Inspection. Enter Q if the inspection was conducted as follow-up on quality assurance sample results. Enter N otherwise.

Photos Taken: Yes or No

Samples Taken: Yes or No

Lead Ecology Inspector: Enter lead inspector's name

Section B: Facility Data

This section is self-explanatory except for: "Other Facility Data," which may include new information not in the permit or PCS (e.g., new outfalls, names of receiving waters, new ownership, and other updates to the record), e-mail addresses…; and "Ecology Staff On-Site", which may include staff names, titles, phone numbers, or e-mail addresses.

Section C: Areas Evaluated During Inspection

Check only those areas evaluated by marking the appropriate box. Use Section D and additional sheets as necessary.

Section D: Summary of Findings/Comments

Support the findings, as necessary, in a narrative report. Use the headings given on the report form (staffing, back-up power) as appropriate. Reference a list of attachments, such as completed checklists, photos, lab reports, etc. Use extra sheets as necessary.

LINKS AND INFORMATION:

"Informational Manual for Treatment Plant Operators"; February 2004; by the Department of Ecology
Publication Number 04-10-020:
https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/SummaryPages/0410020.html
The manual was prepared to help wastewater treatment plant operators complete and submit their Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMRs) and other annual reports to the Department of Ecology. The manual is available in hard copy. To request a copy, contact the Department of Ecology, Publications Distribution Center at P.O. Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600 or by Telephone: (360) 407-7472. Updates to the manual are included on the website version.

Ecology's Wastewater and Reuse website:
https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shorelines/Water-quality/Reclaimed-water

Ecology's Operator Certification website:
https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Permits-certifications/Wastewater-operator-certification

Ecology's Laboratory Accreditation website:
https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Permits-certifications/Laboratory-Accreditation

Ecology's Biosolids website:
https://ecology.wa.gov/Waste-Toxics/Reducing-recycling-waste/Organic-materials/Biosolids

Ecology's Operator Outreach: Andy O'Neil (509) 710-3676; andy.oneill@ecy.wa.gov

Ecology's Municipal Compliance Specialist (Central Regional Office): Lindsay Hunsperger (509) 208-1285;
lindsay.hunsperger@ecy.wa.gov
Ecology's Wastewater Operator Certification Coordinator: Poppy Carre (360) 407-6449; 1-800-633-6193 (within the state)
Poppy.carre@ecy.wa.gov
Ecology's Regional Biosolids Program Coordinator: Ruby Irving-Hewey (509) 379-4737: ruby.irving-hewey@ecy.wa.gov

Reporting Spills/Overflows/Upsets/Bypasses/Loss of Disinfection IMMEDIATELY:
Regional Ecology Office number for spill reporting: (509) 575-2490 to report a spill