

Focus on: 2024 Industrial Stormwater General Permit

Ecology uses federal Clean Water Act and state law to regulate stormwater at industrial facilities. The Industrial Stormwater General Permit applies to nearly 1,200 facilities across Washington. Permitted industries include log yards, tank farms, rail yards, trucking facilities, auto recyclers, marine cargo handling facilities, and manufacturing facilities.

2024 permit reissuance

We update general permits every five years. This focus sheet covers some of the proposed changes. The draft permit materials, available online, includes a list of all of the proposed changes in the fact sheet that accompanies the draft permit.

We want your feedback

Please submit comments on the draft permit from May 15 – July 15, 2024. More information is on [our webpage](https://ecology.wa.gov/IndustrialStormwaterPermit) (<https://ecology.wa.gov/IndustrialStormwaterPermit>).

Online through our [online comment form](#)¹ (preferred).

Or at our virtual workshops and hearings

We will share information about the permit followed by a hearing where people can provide verbal testimony.

- **June 20, 2024, 5:30 p.m.** Online
- **June 24, 2024, 9:30 a.m.** Online



These reach stackers do the hard work of moving and stacking heavy cargo containers, so their tires have more zinc to prevent wear and ensure safety.

Clarifying protections at transportation facilities

Nearly 300 transportation facilities are covered under the Industrial Stormwater General Permit. This includes ports, railroads, bus barns, truck transportation facilities, air transportation, and bulk petroleum facilities.

Since 2010, the permit has required transportation facilities to manage and monitor stormwater in all areas of their industrial operations. Many transportation facilities have implemented the permit as intended by Ecology, however not all facilities were applying the permit facility-wide.

A recent ruling by the Washington State Court of Appeals supported Ecology's approach to permit coverage. The permit applies to all industrial transportation areas, not just in areas where vehicle maintenance, equipment cleaning, and airport deicing occur (which comes from a federal definition from the 1990's). Appellants have petitioned the State Supreme Court to reconsider the lower court decision.

For this permit update, we are proposing a new definition to make clear where the permit applies.

Clarifying requirements for material handling and storage areas

At transportation facilities, cargo and materials are moved between ships, trains, trucks, and storage areas. We are proposing to clarify the definition of "industrial activity" to ensure transportation facilities apply the permit, sampling, and best management practices (BMPs) facility-wide, including areas where material is handled and stored.

Stormwater pollution in these "Material Handling Areas" can come from a few sources. Cargo generally falls into three categories: shipping containers, bulk materials (like paper pulp, grain, metal ore, etc), and break-bulk cargo (such as automobiles or other large machinery). If rain falls on these materials it can pick up

dirt, chemicals, and other pollutants, and flow into waterbodies.

The handling and storage of cargo often involves heavy duty equipment such as reach stackers repeatedly managing the containers and materials in tight turns. As with cars and trucks, material handling equipment may release pollutants to stormwater such as copper from brake pads, and zinc and 6PPD-quinone (6PPD-q) from tire wear. This equipment and activity can also generate additional pollutants from dust, spilled materials, degraded pavement, potholes, and hydraulic fluid.

Stormwater monitoring data collected over the last decade confirms that these areas generate pollution. Therefore, we are clarifying in the draft 2024 permit that stormwater management and monitoring is required in material handling and storage areas.

Contact information

Jeff Killelea

Jeff.Killelea@ecy.wa.gov

360-522-2023

ADA accessibility

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 564-669-1891 or email at Jessica.Shook@ecy.wa.gov, or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility> TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341

Other proposed changes

Protecting local water from toxic tire and PFAS chemicals

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (known as PFAS) are a large group of chemicals. They are often called “forever chemicals” because they never disappear from the environment. We are proposing to add PFAS sampling requirements for specific types of facilities: airports and landfills, as these operations are more likely to have PFAS contamination. Learn more about PFAS at ecology.wa.gov/PFAS.

6PPD-quinone from tire wear particles is lethal to coho salmon and causes water pollution. We are proposing to add sampling starting in year 3 of the permit for some transportation facilities. Learn more at ecology.wa.gov/6PPD.

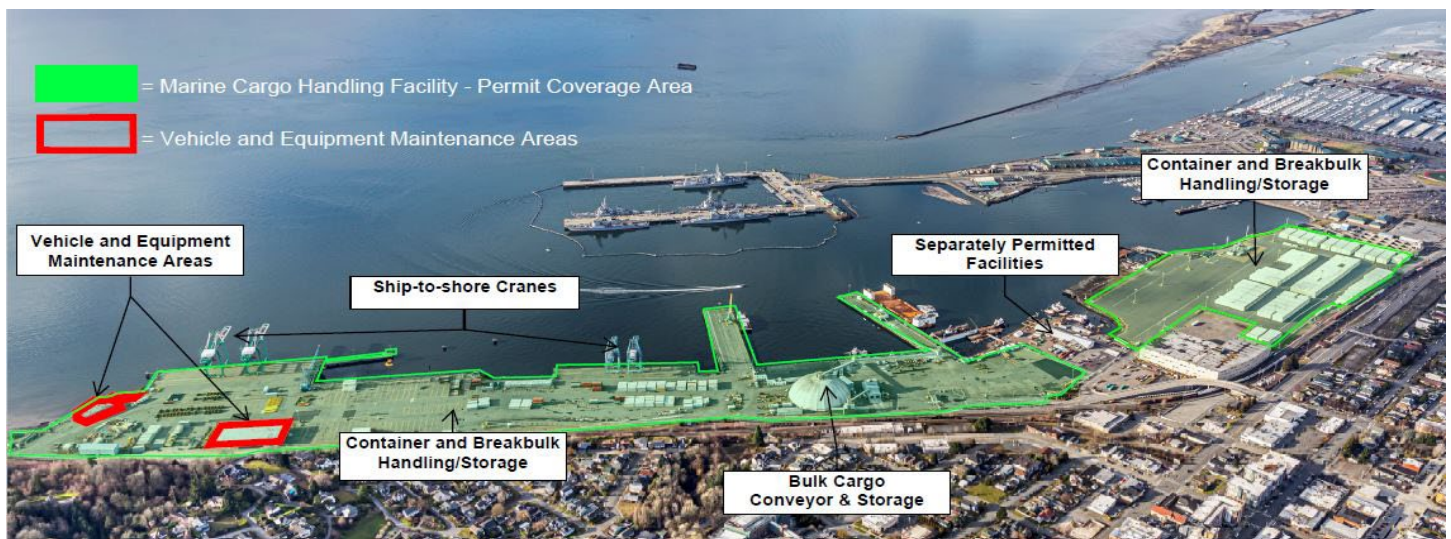
Adding flexibility on where sampling can occur

We propose to allow facilities to adjust where they sample their stormwater discharge. This is intended to help with safety and logistical issues of sampling wharves and piers at marine cargo handling facilities. We would process these waivers as a modification of permit coverage with a public notice.

Increase oversight by removing the automatic approval for areas not exposed to rain

Also called Conditional ‘No Exposure’ exemption, would now only be granted after inspection to confirm that there is no possible exposure to pollutants.

Example of permit coverage areas



¹ <https://wq.ecology.commentinput.com/?id=tx2Ba6krSR>