



Water Resources
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Electronic Reporting for Permitted Facilities in the Stormwater Program

What is changing with NPDES reporting?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently published the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Electronic Reporting Rule. The rule **requires** NPDES regulated facilities to report information **electronically, instead of filing written paper reports**. The rule does not change what information is required from facilities. It only changes the method by which information is provided (i.e., electronic rather than paper-based).

Why is EPA requiring electronic reporting?

Electronic reporting will save you time and money by eliminating paper reports. EPA also expects electronic reporting to save time and resources for the government, increase data accuracy, improve compliance, and support the goal of providing better protection of the nation's waters.

What information must I submit electronically and by when?

If you are currently required to submit **Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMRs)**, you must submit them electronically **starting December 21, 2016**, unless your permit directs otherwise or you receive a waiver.

The rule also requires electronic reporting of certain other NPDES reports, including:

- Notices of Intent to discharge (NOIs) under a general permit
- Notices of Termination (NOTs) of coverage under a general permit
- No Exposure Certifications
- Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Annual Program Reports

If you are required to submit these reports, the deadline to begin submitting them electronically is **December 21, 2020**, unless your permit directs otherwise or you receive a waiver. For more details on what information must be submitted electronically and when, visit

<http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/energy-mineral-land-resources/energy-mineral-land-permits/stormwater-ereporting-rule> or contact Bethany Georgoulas at 919/807-6372 or via email at bethany.georgoulas@ncdenr.gov.

How do I submit NPDES information electronically?

Electronic submission for DMRs uses a web-based tool developed to capture discharge monitoring information. You will only need a computer, an Internet browser (e.g., Microsoft Internet Explorer), and high-speed access to the Internet (i.e., DSL, fiber optic). The tool to submit DMRs is called eDMR and it communicates securely, requiring passwords and known responses to security questions. At this time, eDMR is not compliant with the electronic signature component of EPA's electronic reporting requirements. As a result, eDMR users are required to complete their eDMR submission by printing,

signing, and submitting signed copies of the eDMR to the NC Division of Water Resources (DWR), curator of this electronic tool. The state will update eDMR participants when full compliance with EPA's electronic reporting requirements has been achieved. For additional information on eDMR, visit <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/edmr>. *However, note that User Registration is NOT yet set up for Stormwater Program permits.*

At this time, the Stormwater Program in NC's Division of Energy, Mineral, and Land Resources (DEMLR) is working with DWR to determine the specific method that will be employed to electronically report the other NPDES reports. Electronic reporting tools being investigated include using EPA's tools directly, installing and hosting a version of EPA's tools, or developing a custom-built system. The tools that are used will communicate securely and provide the electronic submittals with the same level of legal dependability as paper submittals.

Are waivers from electronic reporting available?

Yes. The rule provides flexibility to grant temporary waivers from electronic reporting. To obtain an electronic reporting waiver, you must first submit an electronic reporting waiver request to NC DEMLR. For more information on waivers, visit <http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/energy-mineral-land-resources/energy-mineral-land-permits/stormwater-ereporting-rule> or contact Bethany Georgoulas at 919/807-6372 or via email at bethany.georgoulas@ncdenr.gov.

I have never submitted DMRs electronically. What should I expect?

The NPDES Wastewater Permitting Program has offered eDMR to permittees on a voluntary basis for several years. The Department is now expanding the capability of the system to accept DMR data from Stormwater Program permittees. The key change is that starting **December 21, 2016**, electronic reporting of DMRs will be *required*, instead of voluntary. Although there could be minor changes in the process as we approach the federal deadline, the overall electronic reporting process in place is likely to change very little (for those already familiar with it). To prepare the system to accept **Stormwater Program permit monitoring data**, NC DEMLR will be asking permittees to provide location details for all stormwater outfalls, which was not routinely required in the past because this information is maintained on site in the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SPPP). The Stormwater Program will contact permittees with more instructions in the coming months.

Where can I find more information?

- For more details on **what information must be submitted electronically and when**, visit <http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/energy-mineral-land-resources/energy-mineral-land-permits/stormwater-ereporting-rule> or contact Bethany Georgoulas at 919/807-6372 or via email at bethany.georgoulas@ncdenr.gov.
- For additional information on NC DWR's **electronic reporting tool, eDMR**, visit <http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/edmr>. *Note that User Registration is NOT yet set up for Stormwater Program permittees.*
- For more information on **waivers from electronic reporting**, visit <http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/energy-mineral-land-resources/energy-mineral-land-permits/stormwater-ereporting-rule> or contact Bethany Georgoulas at 919/807-6372 or via email at bethany.georgoulas@ncdenr.gov.
- For general information on **EPA's NPDES Electronic Reporting Rule**, visit <http://www2.epa.gov/compliance/final-national-pollutant-discharge-elimination-system-npdes-electronic-reporting-rule>.