

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Audit Preparation Checklist

Disclaimer: The MS4 Audit preparation checklist may be used by communities as a helpful reference in preparation for a department-led MS4 Audit. The completion of this checklist may not be used solely for the purpose of determining substantial compliance with the MS4 Permit. MS4 Permittees covered under an Individual Permit or Individual Group MS4 Permit may be subject to different requirements than MS4 Permittees covered under the General MS4 Permit. Therefore, MS4 Permittees should refer to their respective MS4 Permit requirements to ensure compliance with all applicable permit conditions.

INTRODUCTION

This Checklist is intended to be used as a tool to help prepare for an MS4 Audit by providing a series of questions. However, as MS4 Audits are routinely conducted, this checklist may also be used by anyone interested in evaluating MS4 Permit programs.

Additional information such as “Who should attend an MS4 Audit?,” “What does the MS4 Audit look like?” and “Sample questions” is provided [on the website](#).

Please note, since MS4 Permits vary across Wisconsin (e.g., General, Individual or Group Permits), the checklist user should ensure they are reviewing the correct MS4 Permit.

- [The MS4 General Permit](#).
- [Individual And Group MS4 Permits](#).

MS4 Permit Documentation

Overview

- Have you obtained a copy of the current WPDES MS4 permit for your community and familiarized yourself with its requirements?
- Are records organized and easily accessible for review when requested?
 - How are records kept (e.g., paper files, electronic)?
 - What is the community’s records retention policy?

Storm Water Management Programs: The Six Minimum Control Measures (MCMs)

The MS4 Permit consists of six Minimum Control Measures (MCMs), also referred to as storm water management programs: Public Education and Outreach, Public Involvement and



Participation, Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE), Construction Site Pollutant Control, Post-Construction Storm Water Management and Pollution Prevention. Consistent with the U.S. EPA's Remand Rule and s. NR 216.07, Wis. Adm. Code, MS4 permits require all MS4 Permittees to develop written program procedures for each of its six MCMs describing how it complies with the permit's requirements.

Additionally, while each MCM contains specific actions (e.g., permit conditions) that every MS4 permittee must implement to reduce pollutants to the Maximum Extent Practicable (MEP), MS4 permittees must also establish and work towards their own program's measurable goals.

Below is a checklist describing documentation that should be readily available for an MS4 Audit. Please note that as MS4 Permits vary across Wisconsin, the provided questions are intended to ensure the major elements of each program are included. As such, the questions are not specific to a particular MS4 Permit.

MCM #1: Public Education And Outreach Program ([s. NR.216.07 \(1\) Wis. Adm. Code](#))

- Does your community have a documented written program procedure describing how your community complies with each permit condition identified in the Public Education and Outreach Program?
 - **Note:** Examples of written program procedures can be found within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- Does this written program procedure identify the main contacts responsible for overseeing and implementing the program?
 - If your community utilizes an education consortium to satisfy permit conditions under this program, do you have documentation of this relationship (e.g., contract, agreement, etc.)?
 - If your community utilizes an education consortium, does your written program describe the relationship between your community and the consortium?
 - **Note:** For example, is the person(s) responsible for communicating with the consortium provided?
- Does your written program describe how your community will document and track these activities required by the Public Education and Outreach Program?
 - **Note:** To clearly demonstrate compliance, Permittees should document conducted activities, date of activities, delivery mechanisms used, target audience and other applicable MS4 Permit condition requirements.



- ❑ Does your community have an established measurable goal for its Public Education and Outreach Program?
 - **Note:** Examples and more information about measurable goals can be found within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- ❑ Has your community developed a metric to evaluate the success of its measurable goal?
- ❑ Has your community evaluated the success of its measurable goal or evaluated progress toward achieving its measurable goal?

MCM #2: Public Involvement And Participation Program ([s. NR.216.07 \(2\) Wis. Adm. Code](#))

- ❑ Does your community have a written program procedure describing how your community complies with each permit condition identified in the Public Involvement and Participation Program?
 - **Note:** Examples of written program procedures can be found within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- ❑ Does your community have a mechanism that, at minimum, allows the public to review and provide comments on the following: annual reports, stormwater management programs and, if applicable, the adoption or amendment of stormwater-related ordinances/TMDL implementation plans?
 - **Note:** For example, are any of the listed documents provided on your community's website? Are any of the listed documents discussed during meetings that are open to the public?
- ❑ Does your written program describe how your community will document and track these activities required by the Public Involvement and Participation Program?
 - **Note:** To clearly demonstrate compliance, Permittees should document conducted activities, date of activities, delivery mechanisms used, target audience and other applicable MS4 Permit condition requirements.
- ❑ Does your community have an established measurable goal for its Public Involvement and Participation Program?



- **Note:** Examples and more information about measurable goals can be found within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- ❑ Has your community developed a metric to evaluate the success of its measurable goal?
- ❑ Has your community evaluated the success of its measurable goal or evaluated progress toward achieving its measurable goal?

MCM #3: Illicit Discharge Detection And Elimination (IDDE) ([s. NR.216.07 \(3\) Wis. Adm. Code](#))

- ❑ Does your community have a written program procedure describing how your community complies with each permit condition identified in the IDDE Program?
 - **Note:** Examples of written program procedures can be found within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- ❑ Does this written program procedure identify the main contacts responsible for overseeing and implementing all aspects of the program?
 - **Note:** As the IDDE program consists of multiple aspects (e.g., dry weather outfall field screenings, investigation and elimination, spills response and enforcement) person(s) responsible may vary.
- ❑ Does your community have an ordinance or other regulatory mechanism to prevent and eliminate illicit discharges and connections to the MS4?
 - Has your community enforced its ordinance or other regulatory mechanism?
 - Does your ordinance or other regulatory mechanism provide legal authority to inspect, enforce and order remedial activities? Allow for grandfathering? Identify allowable non-storm water discharges?
- ❑ If flow is observed at an outfall and visual indicators (e.g., floatables, color, odor, etc.) or an action level parameter is exceeded, does your community have an investigation procedure to find the source? Is this described within the written program procedure?
- ❑ Are all dry weather field screenings documented (e.g., inspection reports) and maintained?



- ❑ Does your community have elimination and enforcement procedures if the responsible party is found? Is this described within the written program procedure?
- ❑ Does your community have its own spill hotline or complaint portal? How is this advertised?
- ❑ Does your community publicly advertise the Wisconsin DNR's Spill's Hotline?
- ❑ Does your community have a process for notifying the DNR immediately when a spill or release of a hazardous substance, which has resulted or may result in the discharge of pollutants into waters of the state, has been identified?
 - **Note:** In accordance with ch. NR 706, Wis. Adm. Code, the DNR shall be notified via the 24-hour toll-free spill hotline at 800-943-0003.
- ❑ Does your community's written program procedure and/or training activities discuss when the Wisconsin DNR Spills Hotline should be called?
 - **Note:** Please see the MS4 BMP Menu under the IDDE program for when it is appropriate to notify the [Wisconsin DNR Spills Hotline](#).
- ❑ If a spill or an illicit discharge occurs, does your municipality maintain a summary of the incident and response?
- ❑ Does your community have an established measurable goal for its IDDE Program?
 - **Note:** Examples and more information about measurable goals can be found within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- ❑ Has your community developed a metric to evaluate the success of its measurable goal?
- ❑ Has your community evaluated the success of its measurable goal or evaluated progress toward achieving its measurable goal?

MCM #4: Construction Site Pollutant Control ([s. NR.216.07 \(4\) Wis. Adm. Code](#))

- ❑ Does your community have a written program procedure describing how your community complies with each permit condition identified in the Construction Site Pollutant Control Program?
 - **Note:** Examples of written program procedures can be found within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).



- ❑ Does this written program procedure identify the main contacts responsible for overseeing and implementing all aspects of the program?
 - Such as staff responsible for construction plan and permitting of erosion control plans, permit termination procedures, erosion control inspection frequency and documentation, enforcement response procedures and any other applicable MS4 Permit condition requirements.

- ❑ Does your community have an ordinance or other regulatory mechanism requiring erosion and sediment control at construction sites greater than 1 acre and at sites less than 1 acre that are part of a larger common plan of development?
 - Is it consistent with NR 151 and NR 216 requirements?
 - **Note:** [View model ordinances.](#)

- ❑ Do you document municipally conducted erosion control inspections at all construction sites greater than an acre or more and/or sites less than 1 acre that are part of a larger common plan of development?
 - **Note:** MS4 Permittees are required to conduct erosion control inspections at private and municipal developments.
 - **Note:** MS4 Permittees may contract with a consulting firm to conduct these inspections on the MS4 Permittee's behalf.

- ❑ Does the municipally conducted erosion control inspection frequency meet your MS4 permit?

- ❑ How does your community conduct follow-up inspections after noncompliance is found? Is this procedure described in your community's written program procedure?

- ❑ What are your community's enforcement response procedures when noncompliance is identified? Is this procedure described in your community's written program procedure?

- ❑ Does your community have an established measurable goal for its Construction Program?
 - **Note:** Examples and more information about measurable goals are available within [the MS4 BMP Menu.](#)

- ❑ Has your community developed a metric to evaluate the success of its measurable goal?



- Has your community evaluated the success of its measurable goal or evaluated progress toward achieving its measurable goal?

MCM #5: Post-Construction Storm Water Management ([s. NR.216.07 \(5\) Wis. Adm. Code](#))

- Does your community have a written program procedure describing how your community complies with each permit condition identified in the Post-Construction Storm Water Management Program?
 - **Note:** Examples of written program procedures can be found within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- Does this written program procedure identify the main contacts responsible for overseeing and implementing all aspects of the program?
 - Such as staff responsible for the stormwater management plan and permitting for post-construction stormwater best management practices (BMPs), permit termination procedures, inspection frequency and documentation of public (i.e., municipally owned) and private stormwater BMPs, enforcement response procedures and any other applicable MS4 permit condition requirements.
- Does your community have an ordinance or other regulatory mechanism to regulate post-construction stormwater discharges from new development and redevelopment greater than an acre and for sites less than an acre if they are part of a larger common plan of development?
 - Is it consistent with NR 151 and NR 216 requirements?
 - **Note:** [View model ordinances](#).
- Does your community have and maintain a post-construction stormwater BMP inventory that is consistent with MS4 permit requirements?
 - See [the BMP Menu](#) for information on post-construction stormwater BMPs and BMP inventory examples.
- Does your community have operation and maintenance plans (i.e., inspection schedule) for each stormwater BMP identified in the BMP Inventory?
- Does your community have documentation of long-term maintenance requirements (i.e., long-term maintenance agreements [LTMA]) for privately owned stormwater BMPs in your community?



- Note: Municipal ordinances consistent with NR 216 require provisions shall be made for long-term maintenance with the municipality or other responsible party for any permanent structures.
- ❑ Does your community inspect or require the inspection of post-construction stormwater BMPs at least once every five years?
- ❑ Does your community maintain documentation of all post-construction stormwater BMP inspections?
- ❑ Are inspection reports reviewed by the person(s) responsible for ensuring post-construction stormwater BMPs are maintained?
- ❑ Does your community have an established measurable goal for its Post-Construction Program?
 - **Note:** Examples and more information about measurable goals are available within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- ❑ Has your community developed a metric to evaluate the success of its measurable goal?
- ❑ Has your community evaluated the success of its measurable goal or evaluated progress toward achieving its measurable goal?

MCM #6: Pollution Prevention ([s. NR.216.07 \(6\) Wis. Adm. Code](#))

- ❑ Does your community have a written program procedure describing how your community complies with each permit condition identified in the Post-Construction Program?
 - **Note:** Examples of written program procedures can be found within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- ❑ Does this written program procedure identify the main contacts responsible for overseeing and implementing all aspects of the program?
 - **Note:** As the Pollution Prevention Program consists of multiple aspects (e.g., stormwater pollution prevention plans (SWPPPs) at municipal properties, collection services (leaf collection, catch basin cleaning and street sweeping) and winter road management), the person(s) may vary.

Municipally owned properties with the potential to generate stormwater pollution:

- ❑ Does your community own or operate any properties, such as municipal garages, municipal storage areas and other municipal properties that have the potential to generate stormwater pollution?



- **Note:** Examples of this could be municipal properties where road salt, bulk materials, yard waste and compost piles, street sweeping and catch basin cleaning materials, construction spoils, etc. are stored outside. Examples of SWPPPs can be found within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- ❑ Do each of the properties identified above have a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP)?
 - Is each SWPPP consistent with MS4 permit condition requirements?
 - Does each SWPPP accurately reflect current site conditions?
 - When was each SWPPP reviewed?
- ❑ Does your community conduct inspections at each property at the frequency stated within the property's SWPPP? Are these inspections documented and maintained?
- ❑ Does each SWPPP contain a spill prevention and response standard operating procedure?
- ❑ Does your community provide spill prevention and response training?

Collection Services – Street Sweeping, Catch Basin Cleaning And Leaf Management:

Note: If your community contracts with a company or neighboring municipality to conduct any collection service on behalf of your community, your community's written program procedures should describe how these services are conducted.

Street Sweeping:

- ❑ Does your community conduct street-sweeping activities? If so, is street sweeping conducted as described in your community's stormwater quality management program?
 - **Note:** For example, as described in your community's plan to maintain compliance with the developed urban area performance standards of s. NR 151.13(2)(b)1., Wis. Adm. Code or Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Analysis.
- ❑ Does your community have a written program procedure describing your community's street sweeping program?
 - Does it describe person(s) responsible and other information required by the MS4 permit (e.g., timing and frequency)?



- ❑ If collected street sweeping materials are temporarily staged before final disposal at a licensed landfill, does the written program procedure describe this (e.g., where and for how long collected materials are stored)?
 - **Note:** Examples of street sweeping written program procedures are provided within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).

Catch Basin Cleaning:

For communities with catch basins:

- ❑ Does your community have a written program procedure describing catch basin cleaning procedures?
 - **Note:** Examples of catch basin cleaning written program procedures are provided within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- ❑ Does your community have an accurate inventory of catch basins?
- ❑ Does your community know which catch basins have sumps?
- ❑ How does your community maintain its catch basins?
- ❑ If collected catch basin materials are temporarily staged before final disposal at a licensed landfill, is this process also described within the written program?
 - **Note:** Examples of catch basin cleaning written program procedures are provided within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).

Leaf Management:

For communities with any leaf collection services, including leaf collection drop-off locations and private industry pick-up:

- ❑ Does your community have a written program procedure describing your community's leaf collection or residential leaf drop-off program?
 - Does it describe person(s) responsible and other information required by the MS4 permit (e.g., timing and frequency)?
 - Examples of leaf collection written program procedures are provided within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- ❑ Does the written program describe what happens to leaves after they are collected?
- ❑ If leaves are brought to a municipally owned or operated property, does that property have a SWPPP? Does it describe how leaves are managed and stored?



- **Note:** If collected leaves are composted, please ensure your community is complying with [Wisconsin DNR composting regulations](#).
- ❑ If your community collects other vegetated materials (e.g., grass clippings and brush), is this described within the written program?

Winter Road Management:

Note: If your community contracts with a company or neighboring municipality to conduct any winter road management on behalf of your community, your community's written program procedures should describe how these services are conducted.

- ❑ Does your community have a written program procedure describing your community's winter road management procedures?
 - Is the written program consistent with the MS4 permit condition requirements for Winter Road Management (e.g., does it describe the types of deicing products used)?
 - Examples of winter road management written program procedures are provided within [the MS4 BMP Menu](#).
- ❑ Does your community calibrate its winter road management equipment?
- ❑ Does your community evaluate its winter road management program to identify salt reduction strategies?

Nutrient Management:

- ❑ Does your community have any municipally controlled properties (such as parks, athletic fields, golf courses) with pervious surfaces over 5 acres or more?
- ❑ Does your community apply turf or garden fertilizers to any of these properties? If so, does your community apply in accordance with a site-specific nutrient application schedule based on appropriate soil tests?
 - Do you have a written program procedure describing your community's nutrient application program consistent with what is required by the MS4 permit?

Pollution Prevention Internal Training:

- ❑ Does your community provide training on its own pollution prevention programs to ensure they are being accurately implemented?

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