

STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO MODIFY A WISCONSIN POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (WPDES) PERMIT No.WI-0003565-09-1

Permittee: ERCO Worldwide (USA) Inc, 101 Highway 73 South, Nekoosa, WI 54457-8235

Facility Where Discharge Occurs: ERCO WORLDWIDE (USA) INC - PORT EDWARDS, 101 Highway 73 South, Nekoosa, WI 54457-8235

Receiving Water And Location: Wisconsin River (Petenwell Lake-Wisconsin River Watershed in the Central Wisconsin Basin) located between Port Edwards and Nekoosa in Wood County

Brief Facility Description: ERCO is an inorganic chemical manufacturer in the chlor-alkali subcategory. They currently produce liquid chlorine, sodium hydroxide solution, potassium hydroxide solution, and hydrochloric acid; they also produced anhydrous potassium carbonate but this process was shut down in 2009. These chemicals are produced by the electrolysis of sodium chloride and potassium chloride using the membrane cell process. ERCO decommissioned its old mercury cell process and replaced it with the new membrane system in 2009. This change eliminated the source of mercury and an estimated 1000 pounds per year of fugitive mercury air emissions and 1 pound per year of mercury discharged in the wastewater effluent. However, because residual mercury contamination may exist for some time at ERCO, the wastewater treatment system for mercury removal remains in place to treat wastewater sources that may be contaminated. A maximum annual average of 4.96 million gallons per day of commingled wastewater streams is discharged into the Wisconsin River from Outfall 001. Most of the flow consists of noncontact cooling water. Also discharging from Outfall 001 is process wastewater that receives treatment in a mercury removal system, treated contaminated groundwater, pH adjustment systems, boiler blowdown, cooling tower blowdown, bromine scrubber wastewater, sulfate removal system purge, bleedoff from the cooling water intake strainer, and storm water that may be contaminated. Sampling points regulate in-plant wastewater streams in accordance with Subchapter VI of ch. NR 230, Wis. Adm. Code. Intake river water is chlorinated to prevent biofouling and is dechlorinated prior to discharging with sodium bisulfite. ERCO's solid waste generated by the wastewater treatment processes is hauled to the Cranberry Creek Waste Management Landfill in Wisconsin Rapids.

Permit Drafter's Name, Address, Phone and Email: Sarah Donoughe, DNR, 2984 Shawano Ave, Green Bay, WI 54313-6727, (920) 662-5148, Sarah.Donoughe@wisconsin.gov

Basin Engineer's Name, Address, Phone and Email: Logan Rubeck, DNR, 1300 W Clairemont Ave, Eau Claire, WI 54701, (715) 450-5967, logan.rubeck@wisconsin.gov

Proposed Modification: The permit modification is proposed to reduce the effluent PFOS/PFOA sampling frequency from monthly to quarterly, after a review of submitted data, pursuant to s. NR 205.066, Wis. Adm. Code

The Department has tentatively decided that the above-specified WPDES permit should be modified.

Persons wishing to comment on or object to the proposed permit action, or to request a public hearing, may write to the Department of Natural Resources at the above-named permit drafter's address. All comments or suggestions received no later than 30 days after the publication date of this public notice will be considered along with other information on file in making a final decision regarding the permit. Anyone providing comments in response to this public notice will receive a notification of the Department's final decision when the permit is issued. Where designated as a reviewable surface water discharge permit, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is allowed up to 90 days to submit comments or objections regarding this permit determination. If no comments are received on the proposed permit from anyone, including U.S. EPA, the permit will be issued as proposed.

The Department may schedule a public informational hearing if requested by any person and shall schedule a public informational hearing if a petition requesting a hearing is received from 5 or more persons or if response to this notice indicates significant public interest pursuant to s. 283.49, Wis. Stats. Requests for a public informational hearing shall state the following: the name and address of the person(s) requesting the hearing; the interest in the proposed permit of the person(s) requesting the hearing; the reasons for the request; and the issues proposed to be considered at the hearing.

Information on file for this permit action, including the draft permit, fact sheet and permit application, may be inspected and copied at either the above-named permit drafter's office or the above named basin engineer's office, Monday through Friday (except holidays), between 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Please call the permit drafter or basin engineer for directions to their office location, if necessary. Information on this permit action may also be obtained by calling the permit drafter at (920) 662-5148 or by writing to the Department. Reasonable costs (15 cents per page for copies and 7 cents per page for scanning) will be charged for information in the file other than the public notice, permit and fact sheet. Permit information is also available on the internet at:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wastewater/PublicNotices.html>. Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodation, including the provision of informational material in an alternative format, will be made to qualified individuals upon request.

NAME OF PUBLISHING NEWSPAPER: Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune

ADDRESS OF PUBLISHING NEWSPAPER: 101 W Riverway Expy, Ste 131, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-3367

Date Notice Issued: May 23, 2025