

STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

PUBLIC NOTICE OF INFORMATIONAL HEARING AND INTENT TO REISSUE A WISCONSIN  
POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (WPDES) PERMIT No. WI-0036820-05-0

Permittee: MILWAUKEE METRO SEW DIST COMBINED, PO BOX 3049, MILWAUKEE, WI 53201-3049

Facility Where Discharge Occurs: Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District Combined, Outfall 001 South Shore - Lake Michigan via discharge pipe 1,927 feet east of the facility located at 8500 S. Fifth Ave., Oak Creek, WI, and Outfall 002 Jones Island - Milwaukee Outer Harbor via an outfall pipe at the sheet pile wall directly east of the disinfection tank of the facility located at 700 East Jones St., Milwaukee, WI

Receiving Water And Location: Lake Michigan and Milwaukee Outer Harbor, Milwaukee River Basin/Great Lakes Basin, and Milwaukee Inner Harbor/Kinnickinnic River, Milwaukee River Basin, in Milwaukee County

Brief Facility Description: The Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District is a state chartered government agency providing wastewater treatment services for 28 municipalities and 1.1 million people. The District's service area includes all cities and villages, except the City of South Milwaukee, within Milwaukee County and all or part of 10 municipalities in the surrounding counties of Ozaukee, Washington, Waukesha and Racine. Approximately 3,000 miles of community-owned sewers lead to a 310-mile system of intercepting sewers that convey sewage to the Jones Island and South Shore water reclamation facilities (WRFs). Both WRFs provide secondary treatment of residential, commercial and industrial wastewater. See descriptions for Outfall 001, 002, and 003 below. Approximately 7% of the total sewer service area has combined sewers which serve portions of the City of Milwaukee and the Village of Shorewood. As a result, tributary flows can exceed 1 billion gallons per day during major storm events. Therefore, an Inline Storage System (ISS) or "deep tunnel" is used to store excess volumes and reduce the risk of combined and sanitary sewer overflows (CSO/SSO). The deep tunnel was originally completed in 1993 and was later expanded in 2005 and 2010 to the present storage capacity of 521 million gallons. The system enables the District to collect, store and convey the increased sewage volumes associated with storm events to either or both WRF.

Outfall 001 - South Shore Water Reclamation Facility (SSWRF) is located approximately 10 miles south of the Jones Island Water Reclamation Facility, along the Lake Michigan shore in Oak Creek. At SSWRF, the liquid waste treatment train consists of fine screening, grit removal, primary clarification, activated sludge aeration, secondary clarification, chlorination and dechlorination. Iron (ferric chloride, ferrous chloride, or ferrous sulfate) is added between preliminary and primary treatment for chemical phosphorus removal. Effluent is discharged through Outfall 001 at a 4-port diffuser located 1,200 feet east from the north end of the facility into Lake Michigan. Anaerobic sludge digestion produces methane gas and fuels large generators which produce over half of the electricity needed for SSWRF's treatment processes.

Outfall 002 - Jones Island Water Reclamation Facility (JIWRF) is located in the center of the sewer service area in the Milwaukee Harbor. At JIWRF, the liquid waste treatment train consists of fine screening, grit removal, primary clarification, incidental biological phosphorus removal, ferric addition as a polish, activated sludge aeration, secondary clarification, chlorination and dechlorination. Effluent is discharged through Outfall 002 at the northeast corner of Jones Island to the Milwaukee Outer Harbor on Lake Michigan.

Outfall 003 - The current permit includes Outfall 003 which contains noncontact cooling water (NCCW) from Jones Island. Since January 2023, the NCCW has been rerouted to preliminary treatment with no unique surface water discharge; this outfall has been inactivated.

Biosolids - Nearly all solids from the treatment process are dried and made into Class A exceptional quality sludge (Milorganite) at Jones Island, a commercial fertilizer sold throughout the United States and Canada. The remaining solids that are not made into Milorganite are hauled to a sanitary landfill. The Milorganite fertilizer production process includes blending digested primary sludge with secondary sludge, gravity belt thickening, belt filter pressing, drying, and distribution of Class A biosolids. Under most conditions, an interplant solids pipeline system is utilized to optimize solids treatment and efficiency potential between both WRFs. Primary sludge is sent from JIWRF to SSWRF for digestion, and then all digested sludge is returned to JIWRF for processing into a Class A exceptional quality "EQ" biosolid. If needed, SSWRF can utilize plate press thickening for complete on-site solids handling. This cake production occurs approximately once per year to keep the equipment operational in case of problems at Jones Island.

Permit Drafter's Name, Address, Phone and Email: Amy Garbe, DNR, 141 NW Barstow St Room 180, Waukesha, WI 53188, (262) 574-2135, Amy.Garbe@wisconsin.gov

Basin Engineer's Name, Address, Phone and Email: Jacob Van Susteren-Wedesky, DNR, 1027 W St Paul Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53233, (414) 239-1480, jacob.vansusterenwedesky@wisconsin.gov

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

Limitations and conditions which the Department believes adequately protect the receiving water are included in the proposed permit. Land application of waste shall be done in accordance with permit conditions and applicable

codes. All land application sites shall be approved prior to their use. To receive a list of approved sites, or to be notified of potential approvals, contact the above-named basin engineer.

Cooling Water Intake Structure: The proposed permit contains a determination regarding use of the best technologies available for minimizing impingement mortality and entrainment at the permittee's cooling water intake structure, subject to ch. NR 111, Wis. Adm. Code, and section 316(b) of the federal Clean Water Act.

Proposed Arsenic Variance: The Department has determined that a water quality-based effluent limitation (WQBEL) of 0.2 µ/L for arsenic is needed to protect human health in the above-named receiving water. The permittee has submitted an application for an arsenic variance. The application included a pollutant minimization program (PMP) plan for arsenic as required under s. 283.15, Wis. Stats. The Department concludes that the permittee is eligible for a variance based on the information submitted and information on file. The Department and the permittee have mutually agreed upon an interim limit of 1.5 µ/L, expressed as a daily maximum, and permit language requiring implementation of the PMP. The Department proposes granting the variance to the water quality standard used to derive the WQBEL, as provided for under s. 283.15, Wis. Stats. The designated uses of the receiving water will not change as a result of the variance. This arsenic variance must be approved by USEPA prior to its inclusion in the final reissued permit.

Proposed Bacteria (E.coli)/CSO Variance: The Department has determined that the recreational use standard for bacteria (E. coli) of 126 #/100 mL is needed to protect human health in the above-named receiving water. The permittee has submitted an application for a bacteria/CSO variance for its combined sewer overflow locations. The application included a pollutant minimization program (PMP) plan for bacteria as required under s. 283.15, Wis. Stats. The Department concludes that the permittee is eligible for a variance based on the information submitted and information on file. The Department and the permittee have mutually agreed upon permit language requiring implementation of the PMP. The Department proposes granting the variance to the water quality standard, as provided for under s. 283.15, Wis. Stats. The designated uses of the receiving water will not change as a result of the variance. This bacteria/CSO variance must be approved by USEPA prior to its inclusion in the final reissued permit.

Hearing Date, Time, and Location: **Tuesday, July 28, 2026, at 1:00pm**, In-Person at the DNR Milwaukee Service Center, Milwaukee Harbor Room 107, 1027 W St Paul Ave, Milwaukee, WI, or Virtual via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/vXAtW-klStybZU5Z4LbeWQ>

Hearing Officer, Name, Address, City/State/Zip, and Phone: Amy Garbe, DNR, 141 NW Barstow St Room 180, Waukesha, WI 53188, (262) 574-2135

The Department of Natural Resources, pursuant to s. 283.49, Wis. Stats, has scheduled for the time and place listed above, a public hearing for the purpose of giving all interested persons an opportunity to make a statement with respect to the above announced permit action for this existing discharge.

A hearing officer will conduct the hearing in an orderly and speedy way and will use procedures specified in Subchapter II of ch. NR 203, Wis. Adm. Code, necessary to insure broad public participation in the hearing.

The hearing officer will open the hearing and make a concise statement of the scope and purpose of the hearing and shall state what procedures will be used during the course of the hearing. The hearing officer shall explain the method of notification of the final decision to grant or deny the permit and the methods by which the decision may be reviewed in a public adjudicatory hearing.

The hearing officer may put limits on individual oral statements to ensure an opportunity for all persons present to make statements in a reasonable period of time and to prevent undue repetition. The hearing officer may also limit the number of representatives making oral statements on behalf of any person or group.

Informational and clarifying questions and oral statements shall be directed through the hearing officer. Cross-examination shall not be allowed.

Persons wishing to comment on or object to the proposed permit action are invited to do so by attending the public hearing or by submitting any comments or objections in writing to the Department of Natural Resources, at the above-named permit drafter's address. All comments or suggestions received from members of the public no later than 7 days following the date of this public hearing will be used, along with other information on file and testimony presented at the hearing, in making a final determination. 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.

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 (262) 574-2135 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.