

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-0029050-11-0

Permittee: PHELPS SANITARY DISTRICT #1, PO BOX 227, PHELPS, WI 54554

Facility Where Discharge Occurs: Phelps Sanitary District #1, 2171 Tower Road, Phelps, WI

Receiving Water And Location: A wetland discharging into an unnamed tributary to the Deerskin River, in the Deerskin River Watershed in the Upper Wisconsin River Basin, in Vilas County

Brief Facility Description: The Phelps Sanitary District #1 serves a population of approximately 600 with no significant industrial contributors. Treatment consists of two PVC-lined lagoons operated in series. Within these ponds naturally occurring bacteria and organisms already present in the wastewater break down the organic matter until the wastewater is able to meet discharge standards. Aeration to the primary cell is provided by 21 coarse bubble, static-tube helixors. The secondary lagoon is a 1.5-acre lagoon which is divided into two parts by a baffle. The first part is aerated using five helixors and the second part is a quiescent zone used as a polishing pond. Effluent is discharged on a continuous basis via Outfall 001 to a wetland to an unnamed tributary to the Deerskin River.

Permit Drafter's Name, Address, Phone and Email: Sarah Donoughe, DNR, 2984 Shawano Ave, Green Bay, WI 54313-6727, (920) 366-6076, Sarah.Donoughe@wisconsin.gov

Basin Engineer's Name, Address, Phone and Email: Brooke Klingbeil, DNR, 225051 Rib Mountain Dr, Wausau, WI 54401, (715) 495-1336, brooke.klingbeil@wisconsin.gov

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

Proposed Copper Variance: The Department has determined that a water quality-based effluent limitation (WQBEL) for copper is needed in this permit to protect aquatic life. As allowed under s. 283.15, Wis. Stats., the permittee has requested a variance to the copper WQBEL. In support of this request, the permittee has submitted documentation intended to demonstrate that the cost of complying with the WQBEL through the use of end-of-pipe wastewater treatment may cause substantial and widespread adverse social and economic impacts in the area where the discharger is located. The Department concurs with that assessment; however, this concurrence is subject to USEPA approval before the variance limit may be included in the final reissued permit. In an effort to achieve copper effluent reductions that are practically and economically achievable within the term of the proposed permit, the Department and the permittee have mutually agreed upon specific permit terms that include an interim limitation and certain source reduction activities. As allowed under s. 283.15(5)(c), Wis. Stats., these requirements are contained in the proposed permit.

Hearing Date, Time, and Location: **Tuesday, March 31, 2026, at 1:00PM,**
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84461202020>

Hearing Officer, Name, Address, City/State/Zip, and Phone: Sarah Donoughe, 2984 Shawano Ave, Green Bay, WI 54313-6727, (920) 366-6076

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 (920) 366-6076 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: Vilas County News-Review

ADDRESS OF PUBLISHING NEWSPAPER: 425 W Mill Street, PO Box 1929, Eagle River, WI, 54521-1929

Date Notice Issued: Febraury 11, 2026