

STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO ISSUE WISCONSIN POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM
(WPDES) GENERAL PERMIT NO. WI-0063835-04-0

General Permit Name: Ballast Water (WI-0063835-04-0)

Receiving Water and Location: Waters of the state where commercial shipping occurs, primarily in the open water and harbors of Lakes Michigan and Superior.

Brief Description of Facilities Covered under the General Permit: Authorization to discharge ballast water while transiting in Wisconsin waters may be granted to applicable vessels under the Ballast Water Discharge General Permit (GP) issued by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (department). This is the 4th reissuance of the ballast water permit and contains requirements to minimize, to the maximum extent practicable, the threat of aquatic invasive species commonly found in ballast water, including the use of ballast water treatment systems for oceangoing vessels. The Wisconsin GP is intended to supplement the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 2013 Vessel General Permit (VGP) and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Ballast Water Discharge Final Rule. This permit is applicable to commercial vessels ≥ 24.1 meters in length with a ballast water capacity of ≥ 8 m³.

Proposed Changes from Previous Permit: This permit contains standard requirement structural changes from the previous version to better align with other Wisconsin GPs.

Note: On December 4, 2018, the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act "VIDA" passed the U.S. Congress and established a framework for the regulation of discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel under the Clean Water Act Section 312(p). The intent of VIDA is to streamline federal, state and local requirements for the commercial vessel operating community. Once VIDA is in full effect, including performance, compliance and enforcement standards, the 2013 VGP and state permits may be discontinued.

For specific details and information about rationale and assumptions used in deriving the conditions and requirements set forth in the general permit, please see the permit fact sheet.

Permit Drafter: Susan Eichelkraut, DNR, 1027 W St. Paul Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53233, phone: (414) 897-5714 or email: Susan.Eichelkraut@Wisconsin.gov.

The department has tentatively decided that the above specified WPDES general permit should be re-issued.

Limitations and conditions from the previous permit and portions of the 2013 VGP are retained in the proposed permit.

Persons wishing to comment on or object to the proposed permit action, or to request a public hearing, may write to the department at the 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.

The department may schedule a public informational hearing if requested by any person and shall schedule an 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 and fact sheet may be reviewed on the internet at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wastewater/PublicNotices.html> or may be inspected and copied at the permit drafter's office during office hours. Information on this permit may also be obtained by calling the permit drafter 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 copies of information in the file other than the public notice, permit and fact sheet. 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.

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Date Notice Issued: February 12, 2025