

# STATE OF COLORADO

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Dedicated to protecting and improving the health and environment of the people of Colorado

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Colorado Department  
of Public Health  
and Environment

CDPS General Permit COG-840000 - Discharges Associated with Produced-Water Treatment Facilities (Effective 1 September 2009)

## **Information Flyer No. 1 – Introduction to Key Features of the General Permit** (August 2009)

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### Eligible Discharges

Discharges of treated produced-water to surface waters are eligible for coverage under this general permit. There are two types of facilities generating these discharges.

Exploration and Production (E&P) Waste Management Facilities are generally within an oil gas field, receive E&P wastes from one or more production units, and are exclusively regulated by the Water Quality Control Division. Authorization is a discharge permit. These facilities are typically fixed, but can be mobile to provide treatment of stored water near well pads.

Commercial Disposal Facilities are generally offsite, receives E&P wastes and other types of wastewaters, and is regulated by the local county with the assistance of the Hazardous Material and Waste Management Division (Solid Waste Unit). Authorization is a Certificate of Designation (CD). These facilities are typically fixed.

Discharges to unlined ponds, lined ponds, land, or injection wells are not eligible for coverage.

### Produced Water

Produced-water discharges generated by production of crude petroleum and natural gas, drilling oil and gas wells, oil and gas field exploration services, and associated treatment processes are included within the scope of this permit. In addition to formation water, produced water may be comingled with injection water, any chemicals added downhole, any chemicals added during the oil/water separation process, and any chemicals added during the treatment process.

### Effluent Limitations

Effluent limitations are developed, as a result of a two-step process, on the basis of applying the most stringent requirement from the joint consideration the following federal, interstate, and state regulations.

Federal effluent limitation guidelines (i.e., conventional oil and gas extraction)

Interstate watershed control regulations (i.e., Colorado River salinity control)

Statewide effluent regulations

State watershed control regulations

Statewide and segment specific water-quality standards

In this general permit, the state water-quality standards are applied as end-of-pipe limits: that is, there is no consideration of the available assimilative capacity in the receiving waters. For this latter consideration, the discharger must apply for an individual permit.

The table of limitations in the general permit reflects a two-step process.

First, numeric limitations are included based on evaluations and reasonable potential determinations made during the development of the general permit. These are to be included in each certification.

Second, other numeric limitations can be developed by the permit writer based on the information and produced-water characteristics provided in the application and considerations of site-specific standards (i.e., utilizing Appendix A). These additions are explained in the certification. In certain instances, monitoring may be required to acquire sufficient effluent data for further reasonable potential analysis and determinations of need for a numeric limit, or need for further monitoring.

### Application for Certification

The *Process Water, Stormwater and Ground Water Individual Industrial Wastewater Application* is to be used to apply for a certification to discharge under this general permit, since a specific application form for this general permit is not available.

Full disclosure of the chemical profile of the untreated and treated produced-water is critical to the preparation of the certification in a timely and cost-effective manner. The chemical data characterizing the effluent should include at least the parameters listed in Appendix A of the general permit. If insufficient data are submitted, the permit writer will request additional testing before additional work on the certification. When there is full disclosure, the limitations and monitoring requirements can be narrowed to the minimum necessary to assure protection of water quality in the receiving segment. When there is less disclosure, it may be possible to prepare a certification; however, a substantial monitoring requirement will be included in the certification to acquire additional information on the quality of the effluent. A substantial investment in chemical analyses of the effluent data provided in the application should result in lesser monitoring requirements in the certification with a lower cost.

Upon the receipt of a complete application, the preparation of the certification should require 1-3 months, depending upon chemical complexity of the effluent, nature of the treatment facility, and permit writer's workload.

Also, the annual fee for certifications under this general permit is based on flow (Category 07, Subcategories 17-19) as follows:

From	0 up to	49,999 gallons/day	\$2,150
From	50,000 up to	99,999 gallons/day	\$3,280
More than		100,000 gallons/day	\$9,880

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