



VESSEL GENERAL PERMIT



United States Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Water, Office of Wastewater Management
Water Permits Division
December 2008

Does this final permit apply to me?

This final VGP applies to discharges incidental to the normal operation of all non-recreational vessels of 79 feet or greater in length. In addition, the ballast water discharge provisions also apply to any non-recreational vessel of less than 79 feet or commercial fishing vessel of any size discharging ballast water.

What is generally required?

The permit incorporates the Coast Guard's mandatory ballast water management and exchange standards, and provides technology- and water quality-based effluent limits for other types of discharges including deck runoff, bilge water, gray water and other pollutants. It also establishes specific corrective actions, inspection and monitoring requirements, and recordkeeping and reporting requirements

Are the requirements consistently applied nationally?

No. Under the CWA Section 401 certification requirements, if a State believes that any permit condition(s) more stringent than those contained in the draft permit are necessary to meet the applicable requirements of either the CWA or State law, then the State may include those condition(s) in their certification. A number of States have incorporated additional conditions into the permit. See the VGP, Part 6 for these additional conditions.

Why is EPA issuing this permit?

This action is in response to a District Court ruling that vacates, as of December 19, 2008, a long-standing EPA regulation that excludes discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel from the need to obtain an NPDES permit.

How can I get copies of the permit and other related information?

- The Permit and Permit Fact Sheet are available on EPA's webpage at www.epa.gov/npdes/vessels.
- Publicly available docket materials are available electronically through www.regulations.gov after the FR notice is published (expected publication date no later than 31 DEC 2008)

Who can you contact if you have questions?

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