

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Environmental Protection

FROM: Dennis Merrill
Bureau of Land and Water Quality, Augusta

DATE: October 2, 2008

RE: Chapter 555, "Standards for the Addition of Transported Wastes to Wastewater Treatment Facilities": Post to Public Hearing

Statutory and Regulatory Reference: The statutory authority for this rule is contained in Title 38 M.R.S.A. Sections 341-D(1-B) and 1304(1). Copies of these statutes are included as part of the materials accompanying this memo.

Scope/Description: The Department requests permission to post the revised Chapter 555 to public hearing. Chapter 555 applies to wastewater treatment facilities that want to accept trucked-in wastes from septic tanks, cesspools and other similar sources. While the rule has generally functioned satisfactorily, some facilities want to accept greater volumes of wastes than the rule presently allows. Chapter 555 now limits the amount of septage that can be received to not more than 1% of a treatment plant's design flow. This rule was last amended in 1989 and since the rule has not been revised in nearly 20 years, the Department is taking this opportunity to review and update it.

Environmental Issues: Transported wastes can be of higher strength or concentration than normal wastes. This rule is intended to promote good management of wastewater treatment facilities so that these wastes do not adversely affect a treatment plant's effluent quality. The proposed rule includes the following changes.

1. The scope is changed to include all trucked wastes, not just septage. This would bring all wastes with characteristics significantly different than a facility's normal influent under the rule. It is recognized that some non-municipal plants may receive trucked wastes.
2. New definitions are added for "transported wastes" to replace "septage" and for "side stream treatment". Side stream treatment management methods are important alternatives to adding wastes directly into a facility's influent flow and include holding tanks, chemical conditioning or solids dewatering systems.

3. The proposal would prohibit receipt of transported wastes in certain plants that categorically would be impacted by high-strength wastes. Such plants are those with a capacity of less than 0.1 mgd; those with only primary treatment (the “301(h)” plants); and those with alternate to secondary effluent limits.
4. The criteria for approval are changed to place more focus on pollutant loadings. In doing this, a rebuttable presumption for waste strengths and three levels for approval are proposed. These levels are less than 0.5% of design capacity without any side stream treatment; up to 1.0% when some side stream treatment is used; and over 1.0% of capacity. The upper tier is a case by case evaluation rather than a fixed amount. For this tier, more detailed application materials would be needed and there would be greater technical review.
5. The criteria for addition of wastes are expanded and more detailed. Most of the items are from the old rule or standard license conditions.

Department Recommendation: The Department requests that the Board post the revised rule to public hearing on November 6, 2008, with a public comment deadline of November 17, 2008.

Estimated Time of Presentation: Approximately 15 minutes.