

Technical Bulletin

For General Permit NCG520000

NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES

Revised July 2025

Coverage Under This Permit

This permit covers point source discharges of wastewater from in-stream sand mining operations. In-stream mining operations are defined as mining of materials below water, in rivers, estuaries, lakes and oceans which must be removed with specialized equipment including dredges, draglines and floating cranes. In-stream mining wastewaters are typically water running back to the water body after the sand is deposited on the bank/shore or water from settling ponds. Dewatering of a pit or quarry is not considered in-stream mining.

This permit also covers stormwater discharges which are associated with the in-stream mining activities. These types of stormwater discharges will typically be runoff from sand piles or stormwater, which comingles with wastewater in settling ponds. A stormwater general permit should be obtained for any separate stormwater discharges not directly related to the sand mining operations.

This permit excludes coverage where the wastewater associated with the in-stream sand dredging/dragline or mining operation is identified as process generated wastewater or mine dewatering as defined in 40 CFR 436.31 and 40 CFR 436.41.

Changes in Reissued General Permit

Important changes from the previous version of this permit

- Removed the incomplete sentence from Part 1 Section C.
- Updated the signature line on the first page of the permit to reflect the current DWR Director.
- Updated the mailing address listed in Section D. 2 to reflect the change from NC DENR to NC DEQ.
- Text and margin formatting were updated so that the documents are more consistent (General Permit and NOI).
- Website links were changed to reflect the current web addresses.
- Added exclusion paragraph to the cover page

Key Permit Requirements

- Semi-annual monitoring of parameters specified in Part I, Section A.
- All samples should be collected before the effluent joins or is diluted by any other wastestream, water or substance. (Part II, Section D:1)
- The permittee shall give notice to the Division of any planned physical alterations or additions to the system that could significantly increase the quantity of pollutants discharged or introduce new pollutants to the discharge. (Part II, Section E:3)
- Any exceedances of the permit limits must be reported to the Division within 24 hours from the time the permittee becomes aware of the circumstances. (Part II, Section E:6)

Do I Need a NCG520000 or NCG020000 Permit?

There has been some confusion regarding which permit is required for sand mining activities. The NCG520000 permit applies to in-stream sand mining as defined above. The NCG020000 permit applies to conventional mining operations including quarries, excavation and surface removal. Dewatering of a pit or quarry is not considered in-stream mining. Discharges from pit dewatering are covered under the NCG020000 permit.

If you have a NCG520000 permit, you may also need a NCG020000 permit to cover certain stormwater discharges. If there are stormwater discharges at the site which are not directly associated with the mining activity, for example vehicle maintenance areas, a separate stormwater permit must be obtained.

If you have questions concerning which permit you need, contact your DWR Regional Office. To determine which Regional Office to contact, visit the DWR website at: <https://www.deq.nc.gov/about/contact/regional-offices>

Frequently Asked Questions

1) Do I need to submit the monitoring results annually?

No. The submission of monitoring reports for this permit is not required. There are no standardized Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMRs) associated with this permit. All monitoring results should be

kept on site or made available for three years. The Division may request these reports for review at any time. (Part II, Section E:1) However, as per Part II, Section E:6:a, violations of any permit limitation must be reported within 24 hours from the time the permittee becomes aware of the circumstances.

2) Do I need to employ a certified wastewater treatment plant operator to manage and run the system?

Not at this time. The Division does not currently plan to classify these types of facilities for the purposes of requiring a certified operator. The condition regarding operators remains in the permit at this time in the event that these facilities are classified in the future. (Part II, Section C:1)

3) Where do I find my stream classification?

The stream classification, i.e. WS-IV, C, Tr, etc. can usually be found in the Certificate of Coverage. If you are unsure of your stream classification, you can contact the Division.

4) Does a certified lab need to be used to analyze samples?

No. Since only flow and turbidity are required to be estimated, you do not have to obtain a certified lab.

5) What If I Sell My Business or The Name of My Business Changes?

The Division views changes of name or ownership as a minor modification and requires the Director's approval. Name and ownership changes require you to complete a CoC Modification Form. This form is available on the Division's website at:

<https://www.deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/water-quality-permitting/npdes-wastewater/npdes-permitting-process/npdes-general-permits>

6) When does my permit expire and how do I renew it?

The expiration date of the permit is on the first page of the General Permit. This General Permit expires on July 31, 2030.

To have the COC automatically renewed, pay the annual fee, for which you will receive an invoice each year and COCs with all annual fees paid will be automatically renewed at the end of this General Permit renewal.