

Public Notice of intent to reissue Wastewater Permit, TMDL Wasteload Allocation, and Variance for Chloride

Wastewater
Permit MN0021831

General information

Public comment period begins: November 20, 2023

Public comment period ends: January 19, 2024

Current permit issued: August 20, 2010

Current permit expiration date: July 31, 2015

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Commissioner has made a preliminary determination to reissue this permit for a term of approximately five years.

Name and address of Permittee:

City of Altura
25 Main St N
Altura, MN 55910

Facility name and location:

Altura Wastewater Treatment Facility
Cty Hwy 26
Altura, MN 55910
Winona County
T107N, R9W, Section 18

MPCA contact person:

Melanie Miland
Municipal Division
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
7381 Airport View Dr SW
Rochester, MN 55902
Phone: 507-206-2647
Email: melanie.miland@state.mn.us

MPCA variance contact person:

Fawkes Char
Environmental Analysis and
Outcomes Division
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Rd N
Saint Paul, MN 55155
Phone: 651-757-2327
Email: fawkes.char@state.mn.us

**TMDL wasteload allocation
modifications:**

Emily Zanon
Environmental Specialist Minnesota
Pollution Control Agency 7381 Airport
View Dr SW Rochester, MN 55902
Phone: 507-206-2613
Email: emily.zanon@state.mn.us

File manager phone: 651-757-2728 or
844-828-0942

A draft permit and fact sheet are available for review on the MPCA Public Notices webpage at <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/get-engaged/public-comments> or at the MPCA office address listed under the MPCA contact person. In conjunction with the reissuance of this permit, the MPCA Commissioner has made a preliminary determination to modify the Lower Mississippi River Basin – Fecal Coliform Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) wasteload allocation. Additional materials relating to the issuance of this permit are available for inspection by appointment at any MPCA office (<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/about-mpca/contact-us>) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The MPCA will mail or email a copy of the draft permit or TMDL related documents upon request. Comments, petitions, and other requests must be received at the MPCA in writing on or before the public comment period end date and U.S. Mail comments must be received by 4:30 p.m.

Watershed: Mississippi River - Winona

Receiving water: Dry Run - Class 7, 3, 4A, 4B, 5, 6 water

Description of permitted facility

The existing wastewater treatment facility (Facility) has a continuous discharge from SD 001 to an unnamed dry run to an unnamed creek. This is a class C facility.

The Facility is designed to treat:

- an average wet-weather (AWW) flow of 0.359 million gallons per day (MGD).
- five-day carbonaceous biochemical oxygen demand (CBOD₅) of 835 pounds per day (lb/day).

The Facility consists of two lift stations, a manually raked bar screen, grit removal, two aerated ponds measuring 2.7 acres each with a detention time of 29.7 days, and chlorine contact basin with dechlorination.

Description of TMDL Wasteload Allocation Modification

Expanded Fecal Coliform Wasteload Allocation Justification for the Altura Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) NPDES/SDS Permit (MN0021831) December 20, 2022

- Amendment to the [Lower Mississippi River Basin – Fecal Coliform TMDL](#)
EPA approved April 5, 2006

The Altura WWTP is an aerated pond system with a continuous discharge to an Unnamed Creek which is located in the Mississippi River – Winona Watershed. The WWTP has an average wet-weather design flow (AWWDF) of 0.359 million gallons per day (MGD). The permitted fecal coliform limit at SD001 is 200 organisms per 100ml (200 org/100 ml) (April through October).

On April 5, 2006, the [Lower Mississippi River Basin – Fecal Coliform TMDL](#) was approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. For WWTPs, the fecal coliform wasteload allocations (WLAs) were calculated by multiplying AWWDF for continuously discharging WWTPs, or the maximum permitted discharge rate for controlled discharge pond facilities by the 126 organisms per 100 ml water quality standard. The facility's fecal coliform effluent limit is intended to ensure complete effluent disinfection as long as the WWTP's discharge at or below this permit limit, the discharge will not contribute to violations of the water quality standard regardless of their fecal coliform load.

An analysis of the effects of expanded wasteload allocations, prepared by Tetrtech for the Zumbro River Turbidity TMDL (Cleland 2011), demonstrates that current discharges can be expanded and new NPDES discharges can be added while maintaining water quality standards; provided the permitted NPDES/SDS effluent concentrations remain at or below the in-stream concentration targets.

The [Lower Mississippi River Basin – Fecal Coliform TMDL](#) study calculated the WLA of 0.06 trillion organisms per month (t-org/mo) for the Altura WWTP's SD001 permitted discharge by using an incorrect AWWDF of 0.2693 MGD (0.4167 cfs). By using the correct AWWDF of 0.359 MGD (0.5554 cubic feet per second (cfs)), the correct WLA should be 0.08 t-org/mo.

Correcting the WLA results in an increase of 0.1387 cfs of flow from the WWTP to the Lower Minnesota River, which in turn expands the fecal coliform loading capacity by 0.02 t-org/mo. The discharge will not result in a decrease in the water quality of the Lower Minnesota River because fecal coliform bacteria loading capacities will increase as a result of the increased stream flow resulting from the discharge.

This NPDES/SDS Permit authorizes the expansion of the WLA for this WWTP. Expansion of the WLA will not contribute to the fecal coliform impairment in the Lower Minnesota River because the NPDES/SDS Permit's fecal coliform permitted discharge limit of 200 org/100 ml is equivalent to the water quality standard.

	Approved Wasteload Allocation	Flow Increase	Fecal Coliform Load Increase	Modified Wasteload Allocation
Altura WWTP's WLA Expansion	0.06 t-org/month	0.1387 cfs	0.02 t-org/month	0.08 t-org/month
Lower Mississippi River (AUID 07040003-512) Loading Capacity Expansion		0.1387 cfs	0.02 t-org/month	

The preliminary determination to reissue this wastewater permit and modify the TMDL WLAs is tentative.

Description of Preliminary Variance Request Determination

The MPCA issues this document to notify the public of the Commissioner's preliminary decision regarding the variance requested by the Permittee. The Permittee has applied for a variance from the total chloride water quality standard for Class 2B waters (used to generate water quality based effluent limit) that is governed by the Permittee's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System/State Disposal System (NPDES/SDS) permit. Upon review of the documents, the Commissioner has made the preliminary determination that the Permittee has satisfied the conditions necessary to grant the variance and as a result, the Commissioner has made the preliminary determination to grant the variance.

The preliminary determination to grant this variance request is tentative.

Water Quality Variance Public Meeting

For the chloride water quality variance, as required by Minn. R. 7050.0190, subp. 6, the Commissioner has scheduled a public meeting at the following time and location:

The public meeting will be held by online starting at 6:30 p.m. and ending after the presentation and questions (approximately 30 – 60 minutes).

Date and time: Monday, January 8, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

WebEx meeting link: <https://minnesota.webex.com/minnesota/j.php?MTID=m3b21839b5582d7a2d31a682a7d2f2afd>

Meeting number (access code): 2488 326 0960

Meeting password: Ud3SGVZFg42

Call-in: 415-655-0003

You may also contact Melanie Miland, at the address above, to request a meeting invite be forwarded to you via email, or visit the WQ Variances webpage <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/water-quality-variances> for a link to the meeting.

The meeting will have a brief presentation on the variance, an opportunity to ask clarifying questions, and a period to make verbal comments regarding the preliminary variance decision. Please notify the MPCA within 14 days after the start of this public notice if you would like to request a translator or interpreter for the upcoming public meeting.

The meeting will be recorded and made available upon request.

Procedure for public participation

As stated in Minn. R. chs. 7000 and 7001, there are three formal procedures for public participation in the MPCA's consideration of this matter. Interested persons may:

- 1) Submit written comments on the draft permit.
- 2) Petition the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting.
- 3) Petition the MPCA to hold a contested case hearing.

Submitting written comments

Comments may be submitted:

- 1) Online at <https://mpca.commentinput.com/comment/search>; or
- 2) By U.S. postal mail to the following address:
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
c/o Melanie Miland
7381 Airport View Dr SW
Rochester, MN 55902

Submitted comments or petitions must state:

- 1) Your interest in the permit application or the draft permit.
- 2) The action you wish the MPCA to take, including specific references to the section of the draft permit you believe should be changed.
- 3) The reasons supporting your position, stated with sufficient specificity as to allow the MPCA to investigate the merits of the position.

Public informational meeting

A public informational meeting is an informal meeting during which interested persons can ask questions concerning the proposed facility. MPCA staff will be present to provide information. If an interested person would like the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting, the person should include all information identified above and in addition include a statement of the reasons the person desires the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting and the issues that the person would like the agency to address at the public informational meeting.

Contested Case Hearing

A contested case hearing is a formal proceeding before an administrative law judge empowered to advise the MPCA regarding issues of fact. As described in Minn. R. 7000.1800, persons who submit petitions for a contested case hearing must also state the issues they propose to address in a contested case hearing, the specific relief requested or resolution of the matter, and the reasons (which may be in the form of proposed findings) supporting an MPCA decision to hold a contested case hearing. Failure to comply with these rules exactly may result in a denial of the request. To the extent known, the petitioner may also submit a list of prospective witnesses to be called at a hearing, a proposed list of publications, references, or studies to be introduced at a hearing and the approximate time required for the petitioner to present the matter at a hearing. The decision whether to hold a contested case hearing will be made under Minn. R. 7000.1900.