

General information

Public comment period begins: March 22, 2024

Public comment period ends: May 21, 2024

Current permit issued: October 27, 2010

Current permit expiration date: September 30, 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:	Facility name and location:	MPCA permit contact person:	MPCA variance contact person:
City of Grand Marais PO Box 600 Grand Marais, MN 55604-0600	Grand Marais WWTF 321 2nd St E Grand Marais, MN 55604 Cook County T061N, R01E, Section 021	Stephanie Lyons Municipal Division Minnesota Pollution Control Agency 525 Lake Ave. S, Ste 400 Duluth, MN 55802 Phone: 218-302-6643 Email: stephanie.lyons@state.mn.us	Meghan Hemken Environmental Analysis and Outcomes Division Minnesota Pollution Control Agency 520 Lafayette Road North St. Paul, MN 55155 Phone: 651-757-2327 Email: Meghan.hemken@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>. 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 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: Lake Superior - North

Receiving water: Lake Superior Shoreline - Class 1B, 2A, 3, 4A, 4B, 5, 6 water

Description of Grand Marais Wastewater Treatment Facility

The Grand Marais Wastewater Treatment facility (facility) is located at 321 2nd St E, Grand Marais, Minnesota 55604, Cook County.

Existing Facility

The existing facility has a continuous discharge from SD 003 to Lake Superior. The facility is a Class B.

The facility is designed to treat:

- An average wet weather (AWW) flow of 0.99 million gallons per day (MGD)
- An average dry weather (ADW) flow of 0.3 MGD
- A peak hourly wet weather (PHWW) flow of 2.5 MGD
- Five-day carbonaceous biochemical oxygen demand (CBOD₅) of 885 pounds per day (lb/d)
- Total suspended solids (TSS) of 1150 lb/d
- Total phosphorus (TP) of 15.3 lb/d

The facility consists of a manual bar screen, a comminutor, a vortex grit removal system, an oxidation ditch, two final clarifiers, alum addition for phosphorus removal, and ultraviolet disinfection. Biosolids at the facility are treated in two aerated storage tanks before being transferred offsite.

Proposed Facility

Proposed construction will consist of rehabilitating various sections of the facility. Preliminary treatment at the facility will be upgraded by removing the comminutor and replacing it with an automatic fine screen and compactor, rehabilitating the vortex grit removal system, removing the centrifugal grit separator, and installing a grit classifier. The oxidation ditch and final clarifiers will be rehabilitated. The ultraviolet disinfection system will be replaced. Biosolids handling at the facility will be rehabilitated. A new granular activated carbon odor control system will be installed.

The preliminary determination to reissue this Wastewater permit 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 City of Grand Marais. The Permittee has applied for a variance from the mercury 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 (NPDES)/State Disposal System (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.

For the mercury 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 in-person. The meeting will entail a brief summary presentation of the mercury water quality variance, and key elements of the permit, an opportunity to ask clarifying questions, and a period to make verbal comments regarding the preliminary variance and permit decision.

The public meeting will be held by online and in-person starting at 5:30 p.m. and ending after the presentation and questions (approximately 45 – 60 minutes).

Date and time: May 8, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

Address: Cook County Community Center located at 317 W 5th St, Grand Marais, MN 55604

WebEx meeting link: <https://minnesota.webex.com/minnesota/j.php?MTID=m09ebed24e97db5283c6cbf77d8e60947>

Meeting access code: 2487 207 1408

Meeting password: htQE7NWh3M8

You may also contact Stephanie Lyons, 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.

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 Stephanie Lyons
525 Lake Ave S, Ste 400
Duluth, MN 55802

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.