

## General information

**Public comment period begins:** June 13, 2025  
**Public comment period ends:** August 12, 2025  
**Current permit issued:** June 1, 2022  
**Current permit expiration date:** May 31, 2027

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Commissioner has made a preliminary determination to modify this permit.

**Name and address of Permittee:**

City of Belle Plaine  
PO Box 129  
Belle Plaine, MN 56011-0129

**Facility name and location:**

Belle Plaine Wastewater Treatment  
Facility  
22360 Union Trail  
Belle Plaine, MN 56011  
T113N, R24W, Section 2

**MPCA contact person:**

Holly Mikkelson  
Municipal Division  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
7678 College Rd, Ste 105  
Baxter, MN 56425  
Phone: 218-316-3860  
Email: [holly.mikkelson@state.mn.us](mailto:holly.mikkelson@state.mn.us)

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

**MPCA watershed project manager:**

Amy Timm  
Watershed Division  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
520 Lafayette Rd N  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
Phone: 651-757-2632  
Email: [amy.timm@state.mn.us](mailto:amy.timm@state.mn.us)

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

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Commissioner has made a preliminary determination to modify the Belle Plaine Wastewater Treatment Facility permit. A draft modified permit is available for review on the MPCA Public Notices webpage at <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/get-engaged/public-comments>. A draft permit is available for review on the MPCA Public Notices webpage at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publicnotices> or at the MPCA office address listed under the MPCA contact person.

In conjunction with the modification of this permit, the MPCA Commissioner has made a preliminary determination to modify the Lower Minnesota River Watershed Part 1 Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) wasteload allocation. The MPCA will mail or email a copy of the draft permit or TMDL related documents upon request.

Any changes or new requirements to the draft permit are outlined below. Only these changes to the draft modified permit will be open for public comment. Please read through this letter and the enclosed material to ensure you are aware of any changes and/or updates that have been made to your draft permit.

**Changes to the draft permit:**

- Page 3 - A collection of resources has been added to all permits.
- Page 4 - The facility description has been updated.
- Page 7 - A proposed facility map has been added.
- Page 9 - Proposed flow diagrams have been added.
- Pages 10, 12, 13, 15, 33, and 40 - Station SD 005 has been added as Phase 2.
- Page 15 - The facility plan has been submitted; therefore, item 5.13.33 has been removed from the permit.
- Pages 39 and 40 - Station SD 004 has been changed to Phase 1 and will no longer be required when Phase 2 begins.
- Page 40 - The total phosphorus limit of 4.0 kg/day has been moved to Station SD 005.
- Page 40 - The total suspended solids limit of 33,242 kg/yr and TP limit of 1,160 kg/yr have been copied to SD 005. These will remain in effect throughout the permit cycle.

Comments, petitions, and other requests must be received at the MPCA in writing on or before the public comment period end date and time identified above. Additional materials relating to the issuance of this modified 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 modified 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:** Lower Minnesota River

**Receiving water:** Robert Creek - Class 2Bg, 3, 4A, 4B, 5, 6 water

## Description of permitted facility

The Belle Plaine Wastewater Treatment facility (facility) is located at 22360 Union Trail, Belle Plaine, Minnesota 56011, Scott County.

### Existing facility

The existing facility has a continuous discharge from the mechanical plant (SD 003) and controlled discharge from the stabilization ponds (SD 002). The ponds can be discharged directly from SD 002 or effluent can be returned to the mechanical plant as needed. The facility is a Class B.

The facility is designed to treat:

- an average wet weather (AWW) flow of 0.840 million gallons per day (mgd);
- an average dry weather (ADW) flow of 0.520 mgd;
- a peak hourly wet weather (PHWW) flow of 2.34 mgd; and
- a 5-day carbonaceous biochemical oxygen demand (CBOD<sub>5</sub>) of 306 milligrams per liter (mg/L).

The facility utilizes both a mechanical system and a two-cell pond system at the site. The mechanical facility consists of a continuous discharge activated sludge system with a manual bar screen, mechanical fine screen, grit removal, one oxidation ditch with an anaerobic selector tank for biological phosphorus removal, alum addition for phosphorus removal, one final clarifier, ultraviolet (UV) light disinfection, an effluent pump station, two aerated biosolids holding tanks, and eight reed beds for sludge dewatering and storage. The stabilization pond facility consists of one primary cell with a surface area of 13.3 acres and one secondary cell with a surface area of 20.5 acres. Flows in excess of the mechanical system capacity will be diverted to the stabilization ponds. The ponds can either be discharged directly under controlled conditions, or effluent can be returned to the mechanical treatment facility during low flow periods. Each system has its own discharge point to the unnamed creek that flows to the Minnesota River.

### Proposed facility

The proposed facility has a continuous discharge from the mechanical plant (SD 003) and controlled discharge from the stabilization ponds (SD 002). Combined effluent from the pond and mechanical plant are discharged to the Minnesota River (SD 005). The ponds can be discharged directly from SD 002 to SD 005 or effluent can be returned to the mechanical plant during low flow periods. The facility is a Class B.

The facility is designed to treat:

- an AWW flow of 0.990 mgd;
- an ADW flow of 0.870 mgd;
- a PHWW flow of 3.18 mgd;
- 5-day CBOD<sub>5</sub> of 2,400 pounds per day (lbs/day);
- total suspended solids (TSS) of 2,725 lbs/day; and
- total phosphorus (TP) of 90 lbs/day.

The facility utilizes both the mechanical system and a two-cell pond system at the site. The mechanical facility will consist of a continuous discharge activated sludge system with a manual bar screen, mechanical fine screen, grit removal, two oxidation ditches, alum addition for phosphorus removal, two final clarifiers, ultraviolet (UV) light disinfection, an effluent pump station, four aerated biosolids holding tanks, and eight reed beds for sludge dewatering and storage. The stabilization pond facility consists of one primary cell with a surface area of 13.3 acres and one secondary cell with a surface area of 20.5 acres. Flows in excess of the mechanical system capacity will be diverted to the stabilization ponds. The ponds can either be discharged directly under controlled conditions or effluent can be returned to the mechanical treatment facility during low flow periods. Both systems discharge via SD 005 to the Minnesota River.

The preliminary determination to modify this wastewater permit is tentative.

## Description of TMDL Wasteload Allocation Modification

The Lower Minnesota River Watershed TMDL Part 1, approved by EPA on March 13, 2020, contains an *E. coli* wasteload allocation (WLA) for the existing Belle Plaine Wastewater Treatment Facility, which is equivalent to the existing permitted effluent limit of 200 organisms per 100 milliliters (org/100 mL). The WLA was calculated for this facility using the average wet weather design flow and the *E. coli* standard of 126 org/100 mL.

This NPDES/SDS Permit authorizes the modification of the *E. coli* WLA for the Belle Plaine Wastewater Treatment Facility and amends the Lower Minnesota River Watershed TMDL Part 1. Modification of the WLA will not contribute to the *E. coli* impairment in the Lower Minnesota River because the NPDES/SDS Permit's proposed fecal coliform discharge limit will ensure that the discharge does not have reasonable potential to cause or contribute to an exceedance of the applicable *E. coli* water quality standard.

## 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:  
Holly Mikkelsen  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
7678 College Rd, Ste 105  
Baxter, MN 56425

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.