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NPDES

Vessels Program *Quarterly*

NAVIGATING THE EPA REGULATED VESSELS UNIVERSE

USCG FINAL BALLAST WATER RULE

On March 23, 2012, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) published its final rule for standards for living organisms in ships' ballast water discharged into waters of the United States. This rule established a standard for the allowable concentration of living organisms in ballast water discharges from ships in waters of the United States. EPA continues to work closely with the USCG in developing ballast water requirements and related efforts for the final Vessel General Permit (VGP). The USCG final rule will go into effect on June 21, 2012.

For more information on this rule, please visit <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg522/cg5224/bwm.asp>.

Summary of Outreach Activities

EPA believes it is important to work with stakeholders to improve their understanding of the NPDES



vessel permits. Additionally, engaging with the public allows EPA to better understand its audience and identify needs of various stakeholder groups. For this reason, within the last year, EPA has been actively sending out periodic updates about the NPDES vessels program through its e-mail distribution list, answering questions about the VGP and the Small Vessel General Permit (sVGP) through e-mail, webcasts and conference calls, and has participated in several in-person forums with

various stakeholder groups. Since November 2011, when the draft permits were published, EPA has spoken at 37 forums in 9 different states, including several webinars. In total, approximately 1058 people have participated in these in-person meetings and 662 people have participated in these online meetings. EPA continues to engage in these public outreach activities and looks forward to working with various stakeholder groups as it finalizes the 2013 VGP and sVGP.

To learn more about the NPDES vessels program, visit <http://www.epa.gov/npdes/vessels>. For questions or concerns about the VGP, e-mail VGP@epa.gov. For questions or concerns about the sVGP, e-mail sVGP@epa.gov.

UPDATE ON EPA AND U.S. COAST GUARD MOU

Based on deficiency data received from U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) inspectors, EPA is issuing Notices of Violation to vessels believed not to be in compliance with the Vessel General Permit (VGP) and evaluating enforcement options to deter future violations. Consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was signed between EPA and the USCG in February 2011, the USCG is currently inspecting vessels for compliance with EPA's VGP and sending VGP deficient data to EPA for evaluation and possible enforcement actions. To view a copy of the MOU, please visit <http://epa.gov/compliance/resources/agreements/cwa/mou-coastguard-vesselpermitrequirements.pdf>.

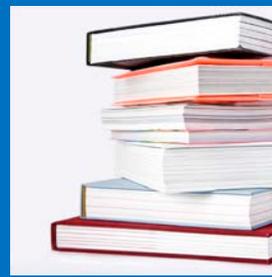
Congressional Hearing on the Maritime Industry



On April 26, 2012, the House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation hosted a hearing titled "Regulation of the Maritime Industry: Ensuring U.S. Job Growth While Improving Environmental and Worker Safety." The stated purpose of the hearing was to ensure that the USCG and EPA are regulating the maritime industry fairly and reasonably. James Hanlon, the Director of EPA's Office of Wastewater Management, testified at this hearing alongside USCG Vice Admiral Brian Salerno. In Mr. Hanlon's testimony, he provided an update of EPA's regulation of vessel discharges under the current 2008 VGP and the implementation of that permit, highlighted improvements that

the draft VGP would make over the existing VGP, discussed the joint regulation of ballast water discharges by EPA and the USCG, and provided an overview of the draft small Vessel General Permit (sVGP). During the hearing, Mr. Hanlon answered questions from the members of the subcommittee about the 401 certification process through which states can provide varying requirements for incidental discharges, and the cost of the draft sVGP for small vessels, among other things. Other witnesses at the hearing included various industry representatives. To view the written testimonies of all witnesses and a video of the hearing, please visit <http://www.transportation.house.gov/hearings/hearingdetail.aspx?NewsID=1608>.

RESOURCES



As part of EPA's continuing public outreach efforts, the Agency has developed several documents and web pages to help vessel owner/operators better understand the NPDES vessels program. These resources are meant to provide an overview of the permits and clarify requirements in the permits. The following is a list of links to helpful resources for the general public:

- [Overview of the Draft 2013 VGP and sVGP](#)
- [Overview of the Current 2008 VGP](#)
(Note this fact sheet is also available in Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish at www.epa.gov/npdes/vessels)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

For those stakeholders who are interested in the more technical aspects of the permits and the rationale behind requirements in the permits, EPA suggests the following resources:

- [2008 VGP Response to Comments Document](#)
- [Report to Congress: Study of Discharges Incidental to Normal Operation of Commercial Fishing Vessels and Other Non-Recreational Vessels Less than 79 Feet](#)
- [Technical Papers on Vessel Discharge Categories, including Graywater, Bilgewater, and Ballast Water Monitoring](#)