

Response to Comments

City of Harrison Wastewater Treatment Plant

NPDES Permit Number: ID0021997

July 10, 2019

On May 22, 2019, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 10 (EPA) issued a public notice for a proposed permit modification of the City of Harrison Wastewater Treatment Plant (Harrison WWTP) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. ID0021997. On June 28, 2018, the EPA had reissued a NPDES permit to the Harrison WWTP. Idaho Conservation League (ICL) filed a petition for review of the permit with the EPA's Environmental Appeals Board (EAB) on July 25, 2018. The EPA requested and was granted a remand on the permit. This proposed permit modification addresses the remand. The EPA reissued the NPDES permit to Harrison WWTP prior to the transfer of NPDES authority to Idaho on July 1, 2018. After ICL appealed the permit, the EPA retained authority for the permit until resolution of the appeal and reissuance of the modified permit. The public comment period closed June 22, 2019.

During the public comment period, the EPA received one comment from the Idaho Conservation League (ICL). This document presents the comment received and provides corresponding response to the comment. As a result of the comment received, there were no revisions made to the permit.

Comment 1. Meeting federal requirements in 40 CFR 133.103(d) (ICL)

At page 7 of the Draft Permit, EPA re-proposes percent removal requirements for BOD₅ and TSS, and ICL is concerned these effluent limitations are not appropriate because the City of Harrison's WWTP doesn't meet the federal requirements in 40 CFR §133.103(d). Specifically, ICL is concerned this facility does not meet the requirement at 40 CFR §133.103(d)(1).

Response. Section IV.B on pages 11-15 of the Fact Sheet provides an extensive evaluation of 40 CFR 133.103(d) and provides the basis for allowing percent removal requirements lower than 85 percent for 5-day biochemical oxygen demand (BOD₅) and total suspended solids (TSS) in the permit. The comment does not specify which part of the analysis of 40 CFR 133.103(d) is inappropriate. See the Fact Sheet on pages 11-15 for a full description of the EPA's evaluation of CFR 133.103(d). The following summarizes pages 11-15 of the Fact Sheet.

Three parts must be met in 40 CFR 133.103(d)(1)-(3):

1. The treatment works is consistently meeting, or will consistently meet, its permit effluent concentration limits but its percent removal requirements cannot be met due to less concentrated influent wastewater;
2. To meet the percent removal requirements, the treatment works would have to achieve significantly more stringent limitations than would otherwise be required by the concentration-based standards; and

3. The less concentrated influent wastewater is not the result of excessive I/I.

To evaluate 40 CFR 133.103(d)(1), the EPA evaluated whether Harrison WWTP consistently met its permit effluent concentration limits using monthly discharge monitoring report (DMR) data from 2008 to March 2019. This is the time period when Harrison WWTP operations were stabilized and effluent data more characteristic of how the plant operates. The EPA found that the facility consistently met its BOD₅ monthly average (97%) and weekly average (99%) permit limits, and its TSS monthly average (98%) and weekly (100%) permit limits over the 11-year period.

The EPA then reviewed whether Harrison WWTP could not consistently meet its percent removal requirements due to low influent concentration. The EPA's evaluation of Harrison WWTP's monthly discharge monitoring reports (DMR) data showed the facility was unable to consistently achieve the 85% percent removal requirements for BOD₅ and TSS over several years and different seasons due to low BOD₅ and TSS influent concentrations, shown in Tables 6 and 7 of the Fact Sheet. Therefore, the EPA determined Harrison WWTP meets the first criterion.

40 CFR 133.103(d)(2) states that to meet the percent removal requirements, the treatment works would have to achieve significantly more stringent limitations than would otherwise be required by the concentration-based standards. The EPA determined that the Harrison WWTP meets the second criterion because the Harrison WWTP influent already received pre-treatment from septic tanks and treatment from lagoons and that additional treatment beyond this could be costly for a small community per the EPA's NPDES Permit Writer's Manual (2010).

40 CFR 133.103(d)(3) states that a lower percent removal requirement is acceptable when the "the less concentrated influent wastewater is not the result of excessive I/I." 40 CFR 133.103(d) defines a nonexcessive inflow to be less than 275 gallons per capita per day. EPA calculated the Harrison WWTP to be 108 gallons per capita per day on page 15 of the Fact Sheet. Harrison also uses a pressurized tank system, which should also preclude excessive I/I. Therefore, the EPA determined that the Harrison WWTP meets the third criterion.

For these reasons, the EPA determined that Harrison WWTP satisfied all criteria under 40 CFR 133.103(d) and allowed BOD₅ and TSS percent removals less than 85%. The EPA determined performance-based percent removals of 78 percent for BOD₅ and 75 percent for TSS.