

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

**OFFICE OF THE
ADMINISTRATOR**

November 8, 1972

Memorandum

To : All Regional Administrators

Subject : Water Quality Standards Review and Revision

The enactment of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 imposes several legislative mandates with respect to the review and revision of Water Quality Standards. These requirements include (1) the inclusion of intrastate standards in the standards program under provisions of the prior Federal Water Pollution Control Act, and (2) review and revision of the interstate water quality standards as they were developed and approved under the prior Act for adherence to the provisions of the prior Act.

Because of their importance in issuing municipal and industrial permits, review and revision of the standards will be a priority task in implementing the provisions of the 1972 Amendments. Water Quality Standards uses and criteria and implementation plan sections of the standards are to be revised by EPA in conjunction with the States in accordance with the following policy:

-- (1) In reviewing and providing guidance to the States with respect to revision of the "uses" and "criteria" EPA will require that the goals and policies in effect prior to the 1972 Amendments continue to apply. Under these goals and policies, State waters should be classified for uses that will permit "recreation in or on the water" and "the support and propagation of desirable species of aquatic wildlife."

-- (2) The water quality criteria to support these uses are those contained in the National Technical Advisory Committee's Green Book Report, and should be uniformly applied to both interstate and intrastate waters.

-- (3) Use designations and criteria established by States bordering interstate waters should be revised if necessary to make them consistent.

-- (4) Exceptions to classifications lower than that for recreation and fish and wildlife should be justified. If, based upon natural conditions or upon defensible socio-economic analyses,

the desired uses are not possible, exceptions can be made. In these cases, the exceptions should be on specific criteria basis. If, for example, the State adequately demonstrates that natural conditions or man-made conditions that cannot be realistically controlled preclude reaching the desired water quality criterion for turbidity, then only this criterion should be excepted for the body of water in question.

-- (5) Note it is not Agency policy to upgrade now use designations for all waters to meet the 1983 level.

-- (6) All State standards now contain an antidegradation statement. Antidegradation is compatible with the goals of the Act, therefore, no actions should be taken to revise such statements. The existing statement should be included in the revised standards.

Under the prior FWPCA, implementation plans were an integral part of the standards and are therefore subject to review and revision. Because other programs under the 1972 Amendments affect the schedules as now contained in many implementation plans, we will not require an extensive general revision of implementation plans. We are now canvassing the Regions to determine the desired extent of these revisions. (. . . see page 5 of these Guidelines)

The schedule for completing the initial revisions of water quality standards under Sections 303(a), (b) is:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Requirements</u>
November 18, 1972	States submit existing intrastate standards.
January 18, 1973	EPA reviews existing interstate standards; notifies States of necessary revisions.
March 18, 1973	EPA reviews existing intrastate standards; notified States of necessary revisions.
April 18, 1973	States adopt revisions to interstate standards or EPA initiates promulgation action. States submit new intrastate standards.
June 18, 1973	States adopt revisions to intrastate standards or EPA initiates promulgation action.
July 18, 1973	EPA reviews new intrastate standards; notifies States of necessary revisions.
October 18, 1973	States adopt revisions to new interstate standards or EPA initiates promulgation action.

Your water quality standards Coordinators on November 9 will be reviewing and commenting on guidance to carry out the above policies. Once completed, copies of the Guidelines will be forwarded to you.

(ORIGINAL MEMO SIGNED BY)

Robert W. Fri
Deputy Administrator