



United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region 2
Caribbean Environmental Protection Division
City View Plaza II-Suite 7000, #48 Rd. 165 km 1.2
Guaynabo, Puerto Rico 00968-8069

FACT SHEET

NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM
Vega Baja WWTP
PERMIT No. PR0021679

This Fact Sheet sets forth the principal facts and technical rationale that serve as the legal basis for the requirements of the accompanying permit, specifically this modification. The permit has been prepared in accordance with Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 402, 33 U.S.C. § 1342, and its implementing regulations at Title 40 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR), Parts 122 through 124, and the Water Quality Certificate (WQC) issued by the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) pursuant to the requirements of CWA Section 401 33 U.S.C. § 1341..

On March 19, 2026, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2 (EPA) issued a final NPDES permit to the **Vega Baja Wastewater Treatment Plant** located in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico. The EPA specified that the Permit was to become effective on **May 1, 2026**. This permit has been modified to clarifying the Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) limitation in Table A-1 and WET Special Condition on pages 3 and 10 of the final permit.

PART I. BACKGROUND

A. Permittee and Facility Description

The Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA) (referred to throughout as the Permittee) has applied for renewal on its **Vega Baja Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)** National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The Permittee is discharging pursuant to NPDES Permit No. **PR0021679**. The Permittee submitted Application Form 1, and 2A dated **August 19, 2022**, and applied for an NPDES permit to discharge treated wastewater from Vega Baja WWTP, Vega Baja, called the facility. The facility is classified as a major discharger by EPA pursuant to major facility definition at 40 C.F.R. § 122.2.

The Permittee owns and operates the Vega Baja WWTP treatment plant which provides secondary treatment. Attachment A of this Fact Sheet provides a map of the area around the facility and a flow schematic of the facility.

The treatment system consists of the following:

The Vega Baja WWTP is a publicly owned treatment work (POTW) that treats sanitary wastewater through secondary treatment of the domestic sewage from the Municipality of Vega Baja. It has a capacity of 4.2 MGD (design flow rate) and provides secondary treatment and discharge its effluent to the **Caño Cabo Caribe**. It was designed to remove 85% of BOD₅ and TSS.

Sanitary wastewater is processed through the following units, see Attachment A (Schematic Flow Diagram for more details:

- Influent Pump Station and Mechanical Bar Screens
- Degritter System
- Receiving tank for septic discharges
- Package Plant (Activated Sludge Aeration Tank, Clarifier, Chlorine Contact Tank and Aerobic Digester)
- Anoxic/Aerobic Reactor Train
- Container Reactor Train
- Chlorine Contact Chambers

- Ultraviolet Disinfection (UV Lamps)
- Tertiary Filters
- Sludge Drying Beds
- Digester

Sludge is thickened, dewatered and disposed in a landfill.

Summary of Permittee and Facility Information

Permittee	Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA)
Facility contact, title, phone	Mrs. Marichu Valentín Vázquez, Executive Director Environmental Compliance, Health and Safety (787) 620-2277, ext. 2893 and 2427
Permittee (mailing) address	Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority P.O. Box 7066 Barrio Obrero Station Santurce, Puerto Rico 00916-7066
Facility (location) address	PR 686, Km 14.7, Cabo Caribe Ward, Los Naranjos Sector Vega Baja, P.R. 00693
Type of facility	Publically-owned Treatment Works
Pretreatment program	Yes
Facility daily average flow	3.17 MGD (in million gallons per day) (2022)
Facility design flow	4.2 MGD (in million gallons per day)
Facility classification	Major

B. Discharge Points and Receiving Water Information

Wastewater is discharged from Outfall 001 to the **Caño Cabo Caribe**, a water of the United States.

The permit authorizes the discharge from the following discharge point(s):

Outfall	Effluent description	Outfall latitude	Outfall longitude	Receiving water name and classification
001	Secondary-treated municipal wastewater.	18°, 28', 13" N	66°, 23', 50" W	Caño Cabo Caribe, Class SD waters

As indicated in the Puerto Rico Water Quality Standards (PRWQS) Regulations, the designated uses for Class SD receiving waters include:

- Use as a raw source of public water supply; and
- Propagation and preservation of desirable species, including threatened and endangered species.

CWA Section 303(d) requires the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to develop a list of impaired waters, establish priority rankings for waters on the list, and develop Total maximum daily loads TMDLs for those waters. The receiving water has not been determined to have water quality impairments for one or more of the designated uses as determined by Section 303(d) of the CWA.

PART II. MODIFICATION

EPA is hereby proposing to clarify the correct parameters and limit for Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) on **Part II, Effluent Limitations' and Monitoring Requirements, A Final Effluent Limitations**, as well as consistency with **Part IV. B. Special Condition 2. Whole Effluent Toxicity Testing, a. Acute and Chronic WET Testing item 1)** Monitoring Frequency. Now both sections of the permit complement each other. We also eliminated DNER's WET condition language from EPA's final permit. Details of the modification are described in the table below.

Facility Name (NPDES #)	Page	Actual NPDES Permit	Permit Modification
Vega Baja WWTP (PR0021679)	3 of 16	Part II, table A.: Requires Acute Toxicity Testing only for <i>Pimephales promelas</i> and Chronic Toxicity Testing only to <i>Daphnia magna</i> .	Part II, table A.: Final Permit will now require Acute & Chronic Toxicity Testing for both species; <i>Pimephales promelas</i> and <i>Daphnia magna</i> .
	8 of 16	Part IV. B.1. Special Condition "B.1.o". PR Department of Natural and Environmental Resources WET language.	This was a typo and was eliminated from the final permit. Due to the amount of flow EPA uses its own WET condition on Part IV. B.2.
	10 of 16	Part IV. B.2.a.1) requests to test just once for acute toxicity testing.	Part IV. B.2.a.1) was corrected to requests Quarterly monitoring during the first year of the permit for both species for acute and chronic toxicity testing, and Annually for the rest of the time period of the permit. This is the required language for a wastewater treatment facility with a Flow higher than 100,000 g/day.