

Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations

Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations (WSER) address untreated and undertreated sewage being discharged into a river, lake, ocean, stream or other body of water. These federal regulations set mandatory minimum effluent quality standards that are achieved by secondary wastewater treatment.

The regulations apply to outfalls with an average of 100 m³ of effluent per day or more, which equates to discharge for approximately 294 people. Systems with less than this are exempt from the regulations.

How to become compliant?

1. Determine the number of households connected to each wastewater outfall.
2. Determine if the outfall meets the minimum threshold for registration with Environment Canada.
3. If the outfall volume is clearly less than 100 m³ of effluent per day, no registration is required. However, if the outfall volume is near 100 m³ of effluent per day or greater, the outfall must be monitored and registered with Environment Canada (1-800-668-6767). Monitoring outfalls involves measuring flow and collecting samples. Requirements for monitoring, record-keeping, reporting and toxicity testing are specified in the regulations www.laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2012-139/FullText.html.
4. Environment Canada will analyze 18 months of submitted data and provide communities with temporary authorization to operate the outfall and determine if outfall is high risk, medium risk, or low risk.
5. The Department of Municipal Affairs will work with communities to develop wastewater treatment solutions to assist with compliance of the WSER deadlines. Building Canada Funds, including Gas Tax Funds can be used for wastewater projects.

If your outfall is...	You must comply with WSER by...
HIGH	2020
MEDIUM	2030
LOW	2040

What happens if municipalities don't comply with the regulations?

Non-compliant municipalities are subject to prosecution under the *Fisheries Act*.

Municipalities that do not comply with the regulations may also not qualify for future federal cost-shared funding from federal/provincial infrastructure programs, including the new Building Canada Fund.

Need Help?

Environment Canada officials can be reached at **1-800-668-6767** or email **ww-eu@ec.gc.ca** if you have any questions.

For further information from Municipal Affairs, you can contact Ian Duffett, Director, Municipal Infrastructure and Waste Management at **1-709-729-7482** or **ianduffett@gov.nl.ca**