



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
BUREAU OF WATER MANAGEMENT  
PERMITTING, ENFORCEMENT & REMEDIATION DIVISION  
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HARTFORD, CT 06106-5127  
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# **Guidance Document**

## **General Permit for the Discharge of Vehicle Maintenance Wastewater**

**Arthur J. Rocque, Jr., Commissioner**

Printed on recycled paper



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**



Dear Sir/Madam:

This package is designed to help you understand and comply with the DEP's *General Permit for the discharge of Vehicle Maintenance Wastewater*. Included in the package is an explanation of how to obtain a general permit and then consistently maintain compliance with the permit terms and conditions. The first section describes the types of facilities which tend to qualify, the second describes registration and authorization requirements, the third outlines effluent limitations and key treatment, control and monitoring requirements, and the final section describes what you need to do in the event of a permit violation. We hope that this information will allow you to better understand the general permit and thereby promote its proper use and application.

This package is part of our continuing effort to improve environmental compliance through increased awareness and understanding. If you have any questions on any aspect of the permit, need additional copies or have any suggestions on how we can provide other outreach or assistance, please call us at one of the numbers listed in this package. We hope that you will work with us to ensure the success of our general permitting program and other streamlining efforts intended to improve and simplify the regulatory process.

Thank you again for helping us keep Connecticut's waters clean.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL HARDER

Michael Harder, Director  
Permitting, Enforcement and Remediation  
Bureau of Water Management

# Guidance Document

## General Permit for the Discharge of Vehicle Maintenance Wastewater

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# Guidance Document

## General Permit for the Discharge of Vehicle Maintenance Wastewater

Please understand that this package is only a summary of key information and requirements that apply to the *General Permit for the discharge of Vehicle Maintenance Wastewater*. In operating under the permit, it is your obligation to be familiar with all applicable requirements of the permit. You should refer to the permit and CGS Section 22a-430 and RCSA Sections 22a-430-3, 4, 6 and 7 for a complete understanding of all requirements that apply to your facility. This guide is not a substitute for a thorough review of your permit and applicable laws. In the event there is a discrepancy between this document and either your permit or the applicable statutes and regulations, the statutes, regulations and permit control. Remember it is your responsibility to comply with your permit.

### Why Do I Need a Permit?

Under Connecticut General Statute (CGS) 22a-430, any person who wishes to discharge any type of wastewater to the waters of the state *e.g.* surface waters, groundwaters and the Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTW or sanitary sewer) must first obtain from the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) a wastewater discharge permit. To comply with this requirement, such persons may obtain either an *individual permit* or, as available, a *general permit*. An individual permit is issued to a specific facility at a specific site with specific terms and conditions to the permit and is typically applied to the most significant discharges warranting a detailed application and review. By contrast, general permits are issued to authorize groupings or categories of wastewaters which are minor in nature, thereby limiting DEP involvement and streamlining the application process. A general permit is available for Vehicle Maintenance Wastewater. A Vehicle Maintenance Wastewater means no more than 15,000 gallons per day of wastewater generated by 1) floor washdown and incidental drippage from vehicles as a result of routine vehicle servicing operations and 2) washing of vehicle exteriors or steam cleaning of vehicle engines. This includes wastewater discharges from autobody repair and vehicle detailing facilities.

### What Is the Purpose of the General Permit?

This general permit was developed to protect the waters of the state from pollution, mainly surface and groundwaters. In order to protect these waters of the state from pollution, conditions in the general permit require the following:

- Vehicles must be washed and/or serviced within containment structures
- Wastewater, antifreeze, oil and steam cleaning must remain within facilities and/or containment structures
- Wastewaters must be directed to sanitary sewer systems, not streams, drywells or storm sewer systems. However, if direct connection to the sanitary sewer system is not available, a holding tank meeting the qualifications listed in the general permit may be installed. If such holding tank is installed, wastewaters may be hauled from the tank to a POTW by means of a properly licensed transporter.

## Do I Qualify for a General Permit?

A facility is eligible to be authorized by a *General Permit for the Discharge of Vehicle Maintenance Wastewater* if it meets the definition of Vehicle Maintenance Wastewater specified in Section 2 and the authorization requirements specified in Section 3(b) of the general permit. Person(s) that discharge vehicle maintenance wastewaters are strongly encouraged to review the authorization criteria and seek authorization under the general permit as appropriate.

Applicants should be aware that the general permit is the most expedient and least costly means of satisfying their obligation to obtain a wastewater discharge permit under state law. In addition, the general permit prescribes effluent limitations, which are intended to reflect the minor nature of the discharge. Therefore, any applicant who applies for an individual permit (permit tailored towards a specific facility discharge versus a general permit) should anticipate permit terms and conditions which are at least as stringent as those contained in the general permit, as well as considerably higher fees.

## Registration Requirements

All persons or municipalities who wish to discharge under the general permit must submit a fee and completed registration form containing the information specified in Section 4(c) of the general permit. The effective date of authorization is the date that a complete registration is received by the DEP. The registration process is described, in detail, in Section 4 of the general permit. Note that registrations may be disapproved and rejected for just cause as specified under Section 4(f) of the general permit.

## Key Permit Terms and Conditions

### a. *Treatment and Control Requirements*

“Small volume autobody repair facility” means a facility 1) from which, in connection with autobody repair operations, there is discharged less than 500 gallons per day of vehicle maintenance wastewater, 2) where steam cleaning of engines is not performed, and 3) where neither engine service nor engine repair is performed.

“Small volume vehicle detailing facility” means a facility 1) from which, in connection with vehicle cleaning operations, there is discharged less than 500 gallons per day of vehicle maintenance wastewater, 2) processes less than ten vehicles per day, 3) where automated exterior cleaning equipment is not used, 4) where steam cleaning of engines is not performed, and 5) where neither engine service nor engine repair is performed.

Small volume autobody repair and vehicle detailing facilities may discharge their wastewaters directly to the sanitary sewer without treatment provided all other permit conditions are satisfied.

All facilities, except small volume autobody repair and vehicle detailing facilities discharging to the sanitary sewer, are required to remove oil, grease and grit from Vehicle Maintenance Wastewaters utilizing a separator consistent with specifications listed in Section 5(a)(1) of the general permit or a separator that has been approved by the Commissioner during the registration process.

All treatment systems require proper operation and maintenance. It is the permittees responsibility to perform semi-annual inspections and maintain a log of such inspections on a form provided by the Commissioner. Additionally, all systems shall be completely cleaned by a certified waste hauler as often as necessary to assure that the separator continues to operate effectively and efficiently.

**b. Effluent Limitations for Discharges to a POTW (Sanitary Sewer)**

All discharges authorized by the general permit are subject to effluent limitations of 6 to 11 standard units for pH and 100 mg/l for Oil & Grease, hydrocarbon fraction prior to combination with wastewaters of any other type. For additional clarification of the effluent limitations, please refer to Section 5(b) of the general permit.

**c. Monitoring Requirements for Discharges to a POTW (Sanitary Sewer)**

No analytical or flow monitoring of the effluent is required under this general permit.

**Permit Violations - What You Need to Do**

If any analytical results or monitoring data indicate 1) that oil and grease (hydrocarbon fraction) exceeds the respective limitation listed in section (b) of this section by greater than or equal to twice such limitation, or 2) that pH falls outside the respective range listed in section (b) of this section by more than one standard unit, the permittee shall notify the Commissioner in writing at the following address, within one week of the violation.

**Changes in Facility Operations -What You Need to Do**

Within fifteen days after the date a permittee becomes aware of a change in any information in any material submitted pursuant to this general permit, such permittee shall supply the up-to-date information in writing to the Department at the following address:

WATER PERMITS OMBUDSMAN OFFICE  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
79 ELM STREET  
HARTFORD, CT 06106-5127

**DEP Contacts**

A list of DEP contacts is provided in Appendix A. For general information and assistance, please contact our Engineer of the Day at 860-424-3018 or the engineer most familiar with your facility. If you have special or pressing concerns, you may wish to contact our Water Permits Ombudsman, Bryan Sousa at 860-424-3848.

## Appendix A: Permitting, Enforcement & Remediation Division Phone Numbers for Information and Assistance

24-Hour Emergency Response Unit: 860-424-3338

If there is a Wastewater Treatment System Malfunction, Proposed Modification, Bypass or Spill, contact: 860-424-3018

For General Information, Assistance and Engineer of the Day: 860-424-3018

Name	Phone Number
Michael Harder, Director	860-424-3701
Richard Mason, Asst. Director	860-424-3804
Robert Kaliszewski, Ombudsman Bryan Sousa, Bureau Ombudsman	860-424-3003 860-424-3848
<b>Enforcement:</b> Michele DiNoia, Supervisor Mary Hogan Robert Lorentson, Jr. Stacy Pappano	860-424-3816 860-424-3282 860-424-3281 860-424-3362
<b>Permitting:</b> <i>Connecticut River Watershed</i> James Grier, Supervisor David Cherico Kima Kisilis Nisha Patel - Stormwater <i>Thames River &amp; Central Coastal Watershed</i> Kenneth Major, Supervisor Melissa Blais Julie Kiritsis - Stormwater Laurene McEntire Olympia Rea <i>Housatonic River &amp; Southwest Coastal Watershed</i> Gary Leavitt, Supervisor Kevin Barrett Steven Edwards Charles Nezianya Donna Seresin - Stormwater	860-424-3839 860-424-3837 860-424-3805 860-424-3840 860-424-3843 860-424-3834 860-424-3914 860-424-3836 860-424-3906 860-424-3841 860-424-3697 860-424-3838 860-424-3846 860-424-3267
<b>Inspections:</b> Colette Ready, Supervisor	860-424-3824
<b>Program Support &amp; Outreach:</b> Bryan Sousa, Supervisor Mabel Chin Donald Gonyea Carol Ladue Karen Leonard Chris Stone	860-424-3848 860-424-3826 860-424-3827 860-424-3828 860-424-3842 860-424-3850
<b>Toxicity:</b> Lee Dunbar Thomas Haze	860-424-3731 860-424-3734

## Appendix B: Quick Reference to Permit Assistance Resources

<b>For general information about permits, contact:</b>		
DEP Ombudsman/Permits Assistance Office		860-424-3003
<b>For specific DEP permit program information, contact:</b>		
Air Emissions -	Air Permits	860-424-4152
	CT CAA Small Business Assistance Program	860-424-3382
Water Discharges		860-424-3018
Inland Water Resources -	Diversion, Inland Wetlands and Watercourses, Water Quality Certifications, and Stream Channel Encroachment Lines	860-424-3019
	Flood Management and Dams	860-424-3706
Office of Long Island Sound Programs - Coastal Programs		860-424-3034
Waste Management -	Solid Waste, Asbestos Removal, and Waste Transportation	860-424-3366
	Hazardous Waste, and Special Waste	860-424-3372
	Marine Terminals	860-424-3298
	Pesticides	860-424-3369
<b>For available resources, such as USGS topographical maps, etc., contact:</b>		
DEP Maps and Publications		860-424-3555
<b>Other Useful Numbers:</b>		
EPA Region I		617-565-3424
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England Division -	Regulatory Issues	800-343-4789
	Public Information	617-647-8264
Soil Conservation Service, USDA		860-487-4011
Connecticut Hazardous Waste Management Service		860-244-2007