



Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

520 Lafayette Road North | St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4194 | 651-296-6300

800-657-3864 | 651-282-5332 TTY | www.pca.state.mn.us | Equal Opportunity Employer

December 15, 2011

Dear MS4 Permittee/Stormwater Contact:

I am sending you this letter because your municipality is covered under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permit which regulates stormwater discharges into Minnesota's lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands. The general permit covers approximately 235 MS4s which include counties, cities, townships, watershed districts, and "nontraditional" MS4s such as universities, colleges, and correctional facilities. As you may know, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is working to reissue this general permit. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with some information on the permit and schedule for reissuance (see attached *Factsheet: Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permit Reissuance, November 2011*).

MPCA staff solicited and obtained stakeholder and work group input in drafting the permit. Staff also considered U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidance, and state and federal regulations. The draft permit was originally placed on public notice May 31, 2011, for a 45-day comment period. It was reopened for comments from August 8 – 29, 2011 largely due to our inability to respond to inquiries from interested parties during the state shutdown in July. Staff has reviewed all comments received during the public notice periods. This is a critical and challenging step in the process. Commenters often provide differing viewpoints on similar issues and all comments must be considered when making revisions to the draft permit.

We have received feedback from cities and other permittees stating that the costs to implement a stormwater management program are substantial. We understand and are sensitive to the current economic climate and the resulting impacts on funding at the local, state, and national levels. We will be working with MS4 permittees to find effective solutions that help minimize costs while meeting state and federal requirements established to ensure protection of our state's valuable water resources.

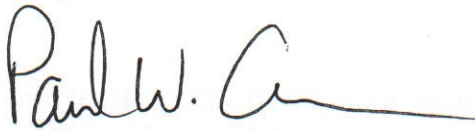
Our overarching strategy for reissuance of the MS4 General Permit is to balance sensitivity to the current economic climate with federal and state legal requirements and environmental needs. We intend to work closely with cities in finalizing the MS4 General Permit and will look for ways to reduce costs where possible. To that end, we have meetings scheduled in December with our permittees on potential revisions to the draft permit based on the main issues identified in their comments. The meetings are scheduled for December 8 and 14, 2011, both from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., at the Roseville Library, located at 2180 Hamline Avenue North, Roseville. The MS4 permittees who submitted comments on the draft permit were specifically invited; however, all MS4 permittees were notified that they were welcome to attend. We will assess further needs after these meetings have been held.

Also, once we have developed revised permit language, we are planning to have another official public comment period on the revised draft MS4 General Permit so everyone will have equal access to review and comment on the proposed revisions. The schedule for public notice has not yet been determined, as much work remains with revising the draft permit language. Information on the next public comment period will be made available on the Municipal Stormwater webpage at:

<http://www.pca.state.mn.us/aj0ra7a>

I hope this information is helpful. Should you have questions, please contact Duane Duncanson,
Stormwater Policy and Technical Assistance Unit at 651-757-2323.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul W. Aasen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Paul W. Aasen
Commissioner

PWA/MHL:wgp

Attachment