



2024 Review of Indiana's Water Quality Standards

Environmental Rules Board Meeting
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What is a Water Quality Standards Review?

- Clean Water Act requirement for states, once every three years.
- An opportunity for the public to comment on the need for revisions, additions, or other changes to Indiana's water quality standards.
- Public comment period continues through Jan. 5, 2025.



Core Components of Water Quality Standards

- Designated uses for Indiana surface water.
 - Aquatic life, recreation, drinking water, agricultural, industrial.
- Criteria to protect designated uses.
 - Narrative and numeric.
- Antidegradation requirements
 - Maintain the level of water quality to protect designated uses.
 - Prevent significant lowering of water quality unless there is a social and economic need.



Indiana Surface Water Quality Standards

- Two sets of rules:
 - Waters outside of the Great Lakes System (“Downstate”).
 - Waters within the Great Lakes System.
- Differences between rules:
 - Criteria;
 - Methodology to derive criteria for substances that are not in rule; and
 - Specific requirements for Great Lakes states and provinces.

One of IDEM’s overarching goals is to have consistent WQS rules for the whole state, when it makes sense to do so.



Indiana Surface Water Quality Standards

- WQS are the foundation for other regulatory actions such as permitting, compliance, enforcement, as well as monitoring and assessing the quality of Indiana's surface waters.



Aquatic Life Methodology Rulemaking

LSA 21-539

- Rulemaking currently underway to update Downstate procedures for calculating aquatic life criteria for substances for which U.S. EPA has not published NRWQC.
 - Update the aquatic life methodology to reflect current U.S. EPA guidance.
 - IDEM uses these methodologies to derive ambient WQC when there are not criteria in rule for substances that could adversely impact aquatic life.



IDEM Priorities for 2024 WQS Review

- **Adopt EPA's 2018 Aluminum Criteria**
 - Criteria are a function of pH, hardness, and dissolved organic carbon (DOC).
 - IDEM is working on developing implementation components related to adopting the 2018 Aluminum Criteria.
 - IDEM has collected more DOC data across the state and is evaluating this data to understand how the 2018 aluminum criterion changes with varying DOC values.
 - IDEM is working on how to accurately assess waterbodies for aluminum, based on the 2018 Aluminum Criteria. There is a need for an updated analytical method for dissolved aluminum in surface water.



IDEM Priorities for 2021 WQS Review

- Adopt NRWQC aquatic life criteria for substances not included in our current rules including: acrolein (2009), carbaryl (2012), diazinon (2005), nonylphenol (2005), and tributyltin (2004).
 - For waters within and outside of the Great Lakes System.
- These substances are a mix of pesticides, biocides, and anti-fouling agents



IDEM Priorities for 2024 WQS Review

- Update Indiana's procedures for calculating human health criteria to reflect current U.S. EPA guidance and to implement consistent statewide procedures.
 - Used to derive criteria for chemicals that do not have a U.S. EPA NRWQC but have the potential to impact human health.
 - Includes updated exposure, bioaccumulation, and toxicity factors that reflect the latest scientific information and U.S. EPA policies.
 - Exposure factor examples include average body weight, daily drinking water intake, etc.



IDEM Priorities for 2024 WQS Review

- Adopt new and updated human health NRWC published in 2015 for 94 chemical pollutants.
 - Derived using updated exposure, bioaccumulation, and toxicity factors that reflect the latest scientific information and U.S. EPA policies.
 - During the 2021 WQS review, IDEM received one comment inquiring whether IDEM planned to adopt the 2015 U.S. EPA updated exposure assumptions used to calculate human health criteria, and the new and updated 94 human health criteria derived using these updated exposure assumptions.
 - This rulemaking would update many Downstate human health criteria.



IDEM Priorities for 2024 WQS Review

- Remove the limited use waters classification and waters classified for limited use in 327 IAC 2-1 and 327 IAC 2-1.5.



IDEM Priorities for 2024 Review

- Update current Indiana WQS variance rules to include a 2015 U.S. EPA rule (40 CFR 131.14) that establishes a regulatory framework for the adoption of WQS variances to implement adaptive management approaches to improve water quality.



Questions?

Public Comment Period for 2024 WQS Review Closes

Jan. 5, 2025



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[IDEM Water Quality Standards Webpage](https://www.idem.IN.gov/cleanwater/resources/water-quality-standards)

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