Water Quality Criteria/Ammonia: Missouri Department of Natural Resources Schedules Open Houses to Discuss Variance

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The Missouri Department of Natural Resources ("MDNR") has scheduled a number of open houses to:

… to assist communities with domestic wastewater treatment lagoons pre-file for discharger-specific variances from proposed ammonia criteria.

MDNR staff is stated to be available at the events to help complete the forms and related documentation to support a potential application for a variance from more stringent effluent limitations.

Section 303 of the Clean Water Act requires that each state develop Water Quality Standards ("WQS") for jurisdictional Waters of the United States within their borders. WQS serve a dual purpose. They establish the water quality goals for a specific waterbody and also serve as a regulatory basis for the development of water quality-based effluent limits and strategies for individual point sources.

A WQS consists of three parts:

1. The designated uses of a waterbody;
2. The Water Quality Criteria ("WQC") that are necessary to protect existing uses and to attain the beneficial uses designated by the state; and
3. An antidegradation statement or policy to protect existing uses and high-quality water.

WQC are ambient water quality conditions deemed protective for the uses of a waterbody. States are required by the Clean Water Act to adopt WQC protective of the designated uses. They represent a judgment as to what levels, concentrations, or conditions can support a desired use.

Information about the open houses can be found here.