

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (EXCERPT)
Act 451 of 1994

324.3112a Discharge of untreated sewage from sewer system; notification; duties of municipality; legal action by state not limited; penalties and fines; definitions.

Sec. 3112a.

(1) Except for sewer systems described in subsection (8), if untreated sewage or partially treated sewage is directly or indirectly discharged from a sewer system onto land or into the waters of the state, the person responsible for the sewer system shall immediately, but not more than 24 hours after the discharge begins, notify the department; local health departments as defined in section 1105 of the public health code, 1978 PA 368, MCL 333.1105; a daily newspaper of general circulation in the county or counties in which a municipality notified pursuant to subsection (4) is located; and a daily newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the discharge occurred or is occurring of all of the following:

(a) Promptly after the discharge starts, by telephone or in another manner required by the department, that the discharge is occurring.

(b) At the conclusion of the discharge, in writing or in another manner required by the department, all of the following:

(i) The volume and quality of the discharge as measured pursuant to procedures and analytical methods approved by the department.

(ii) The reason for the discharge.

(iii) The waters or land area, or both, receiving the discharge.

(iv) The time the discharge began and ended as measured pursuant to procedures approved by the department.

(v) Verification of the person's compliance status with the requirements of its national pollutant discharge elimination system permit or groundwater discharge permit and applicable state and federal statutes, rules, and orders.

(2) Upon being notified of a discharge under subsection (1), the department shall promptly post the notification on its website.

(3) Each time a discharge to surface waters occurs under subsection (1), the person responsible for the sewer system shall test the affected waters for E. coli to assess the risk to the public health as a result of the discharge and shall provide the test results to the affected local county health departments and to the department. The testing shall be done at locations specified by each affected local county health department but shall not exceed 10 tests for each separate discharge event. The requirement for this testing may be waived by the affected local county health department if the affected local county health department determines that such testing is not needed to assess the risk to the public health as a result of the discharge event.

(4) A person responsible for a sewer system that may discharge untreated sewage or partially treated sewage into the waters of the state shall annually contact each municipality whose jurisdiction contains waters that may be affected by the discharge. If those contacted municipalities wish to be notified in the same manner as provided in subsection (1), the person responsible for the sewer system shall provide that notification.

(5) A person who is responsible for a discharge of untreated sewage or partially treated sewage from a sewer system into the waters of the state shall comply with the requirements of its national pollutant discharge elimination system permit or groundwater discharge permit and applicable state and federal statutes, rules, and orders.

(6) This section does not authorize the discharge of untreated sewage or partially treated sewage into the waters of the state or limit the state from bringing legal action as otherwise authorized by this part.

(7) The penalties and fines provided for in section 3115 apply to a violation of this section.

(8) For sewer systems that discharge to the groundwater via a subsurface disposal system, that do not have a groundwater discharge permit issued by the department, and the discharge of untreated sewage or partially treated sewage is not to surface waters, the person responsible for the sewer system shall notify the local health department in accordance with subsection (1)(a) and (b), but the requirements of subsections (2), (3), (4), and (5) do not apply.

(9) As used in this section:

(a) "Partially treated sewage" means any sewage, sewage and storm water, or sewage and wastewater, from domestic or industrial sources that meets 1 or more of the following:

(i) Is not treated to national secondary treatment standards for wastewater or that is treated to a level less than that required by the person's national pollutant discharge elimination system permit.

(ii) Is treated to a level less than that required by the person's groundwater discharge permit.

(iii) Is found on the ground surface.

(b) "Sewer system" means a public or privately owned sewer system designed and used to convey or treat sanitary sewage or sanitary sewage and storm water. Sewer system does not include an on-site wastewater treatment system serving 1 residential unit or duplex.

(c) "Surface water" means all of the following, but does not include drainage ways and ponds used solely for wastewater conveyance, treatment, or control:

- (i) The Great Lakes and their connecting waters.
- (ii) Inland lakes.
- (iii) Rivers.
- (iv) Streams.
- (v) Impoundments.
- (vi) Open drains.
- (vii) Other surface bodies of water.

History: 1994, Act 451, Eff. Mar. 30, 1995 ;-- Am. 1998, Act 3, Imd. Eff. Jan. 30, 1998 ;-- Am. 2000, Act 286, Imd. Eff. July 10, 2000 ;-- Am. 2004, Act 72, Imd. Eff. Apr. 20, 2004

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