Corrections and Clarifications to Toxics Water Quality Standards Regulations Rulemaking

**Proposed Rule Revisions**

**340-041-0033**

**Toxic Substances**

(1) Amendments to sections (1-5) and (7) of this rule (OAR 340-041-0033) and associated revisions to Tables 20, 33A, 33B, 33C, and 40 become effective on April 18, 2014. The amendments do not become applicable for purposes of ORS chapter 468B or the federal Clean Water Act, however, unless approved by EPApursuant to 40 CFR 131.21 (4/27/2000).

(2) **Toxic Substances Narrative.** Toxic substances may not be introduced above natural background levels in waters of the state in amounts, concentrations, or combinations that may be harmful, may chemically change to harmful forms in the environment, or may accumulate in sediments or bioaccumulate in aquatic life or wildlife to levels that adversely affect public health, safety, or welfare or aquatic life, wildlife, or other designated beneficial uses.

(3) **Aquatic Life Numeric Criteria**. Levels of toxic substances in waters of the state may not exceed the applicable aquatic life criteria listed in Table 30.

(4) **Human Health Numeric Criteria**. The criteria for waters of the state listed in Table 40 are established to protect Oregonians from potential adverse health effects associated with long-term exposure to toxic substances associated with consumption of fish, shellfish, and water.

(5) To establish permit or other regulatory limits for toxic substances for which criteria are not included in Table 30 or Table 40, the department may use the guidance values in Table 31, public health advisories, and other published scientific literature. The department may also require or conduct bio-assessment studies to monitor the toxicity to aquatic life of complex effluents, other suspected discharges, or chemical substances without numeric criteria.

(6) Establishing Site-Specific Background Pollutant Criteria: This provision is a performance based water quality standard that results in site-specific human health water quality criteria under the conditions and procedures specified in this rule section. It addresses existing permitted discharges of a pollutant removed from the same body of water. For waterbodies where a discharge does not increase the pollutant’s mass and does not increase the pollutant concentration by more than 3%, and where the water body meets a pollutant concentration associated with a risk level of 1x10-4, DEQ concludes that the pollutant concentration continues to protect human health.

(a) Definitions: For the purpose of this section (OAR 340-041-0033(6)):

(A) “Background pollutant concentration” means the ambient water body concentration immediately upstream of the discharge, regardless of whether those pollutants are natural or result from upstream human activity.

(B) An “intake pollutant” is the amount of a pollutant that is present in public waters (including groundwater) as provided in subsection (C), below, at the time it is withdrawn from such waters by the discharger or other facility supplying the discharger with intake water.

(C) “Same body of water”: An intake pollutant is considered to be from the “same body of water” as the discharge if the department finds that the intake pollutant would have reached the vicinity of the outfall point in the receiving water within a reasonable period had it not been removed by the permittee. This finding may be deemed established if:

(i) The background concentration of the pollutant in the receiving water (excluding any amount of the pollutant in the facility's discharge) is similar to that in the intake water;

(ii) There is a direct hydrological connection between the intake and discharge points; and

(I) The department may also consider other site-specific factors relevant to the transport and fate of the pollutant to make the finding in a particular case that a pollutant would or would not have reached the vicinity of the outfall point in the receiving water within a reasonable period had it not been removed by the permittee.

(II) An intake pollutant from groundwater may be considered to be from the “same body of water” if the department determines that the pollutant would have reached the vicinity of the outfall point in the receiving water within a reasonable period had it not been removed by the permittee, except that such a pollutant is not from the same body of water if the groundwater contains the pollutant partially or entirely due to past or present human activity, such as industrial, commercial, or municipal operations, disposal actions, or treatment processes.

(iii) Water quality characteristics (e.g., temperature, pH, hardness) are similar in the intake and receiving waters.

(b) Applicability

(A) Site-specific criteria may be established under this rule section only for carcinogenic pollutants.

(B) Site-specific criteria established under this rule section apply in the vicinity of the discharge for purposes of establishing permit limits for the specified permittee.

(C) The underlying waterbody criteria continue to apply for all other Clean Water Act programs.

(D) The site-specific background pollutant criterion will be effective upon department issuance of the permit for the specified permittee.

(E) Any site-specific criteria developed under this procedure will be re-evaluated upon permit renewal.

(c) A site-specific background pollutant criterion may be established where all of the following conditions are met:

(A) The discharger has a currently effective NPDES permit;

(B) The mass of the pollutant discharged to the receiving waterbody does not exceed the mass of the intake pollutant from the same body of water, as defined in section (6)(a)(C) above, and, therefore, does not increase the total mass load of the pollutant in the receiving water body;

(C) The discharger has not been assigned a TMDL wasteload allocation for the pollutant in question;

(D) The permittee uses any feasible pollutant reduction measures available and known to minimize the pollutant concentration in their discharge;

(E) The pollutant discharge has not been chemically or physically altered in a manner that causes adverse water quality impacts that would not occur if the intake pollutants were left in-stream; and,

(F) The timing and location of the pollutant discharge would not cause adverse water quality impacts that would not occur if the intake pollutant were left in-stream.

(d) The site-specific background pollutant criterion must be the most conservative of the following four values. The procedures deriving these values are described in the sections (6)(e) of this rule.

(A) The projected in-stream pollutant concentration resulting from the current discharge concentration and any feasible pollutant reduction measures under (c)(D) above, after mixing with the receiving stream.

(B) The projected in-stream pollutant concentration resulting from the portion of the current discharge concentration associated with the intake pollutant mass after mixing with the receiving stream. This analysis ensures that there will be no increase in the mass of the intake pollutant in the receiving water body as required by condition (c)(B) above.

(C) The projected in-stream pollutant concentration associated with a 3% increase above the background pollutant concentration as calculated:

(i) For the mainstem Willamette and Columbia Rivers, using 25% of the harmonic mean flow of the waterbody.

(ii) For all other waters, using 100% of the harmonic mean flow or similar critical flow value of the waterbody.

(D) A criterion concentration value representing a human health risk level of 1 ? 10-4. This value is calculated using EPA’s human health criteria derivation equation for carcinogens (EPA 2000), a risk level of 1 ? 10-4, and the same values for the remaining calculation variables that were used to derive the underlying human health criterion.

(e) Procedure to derive a site-specific human health water quality criterion to address a background pollutant:

(A) The department will develop a flow-weighted characterization of the relevant flows and pollutant concentrations of the receiving waterbody, effluent and all facility intake pollutant sources to determine the fate and transport of the pollutant mass.

(i) The pollutant mass in the effluent discharged to a receiving waterbody may not exceed the mass of the intake pollutant from the same body of water.

(ii) Where a facility discharges intake pollutants from multiple sources that originate from the receiving waterbody and from other waterbodies, the department will calculate the flow-weighted amount of each source of the pollutant in the characterization.

(iii) Where intake water for a facility is provided by a municipal water supply system and the supplier provides treatment of the raw water that removes an intake water pollutant, the concentration and mass of the intake water pollutant shall be determined at the point where the water enters the water supplier’s distribution system.

(B) Using the flow weighted characterization developed in Section (6)(e)(A), the department will calculate the in-stream pollutant concentration following mixing of the discharge into the receiving water. The resultant concentration will be used to determine the conditions in Section (6)(d)(A) and (B).

(C) Using the flow weighted characterization, the department will calculate the in-stream pollutant concentration based on an increase of 3% above background pollutant concentration. The resultant concentration will be used to determine the condition in Section (6)(d)(C).

(i) For the mainstem Willamette and Columbia Rivers, 25% of the harmonic mean flow of the waterbody will be used.

(ii) For all other waters, 100% of the harmonic mean flow or similar critical flow value of the waterbody will be used.

(D) The department will select the most conservative of the following values as the site-specific water quality criterion.

(i) The projected in-stream pollutant concentration described in Section 6(e)(B);

(ii) The in-stream pollutant concentration based on an increase of 3% above background described in Section (6)(e)(C); or

(iii) A water quality criterion based on a risk level of 1 x 10-4.

(f) Calculation of water quality based effluent limits based on a site-specific background pollutant criterion:

(A) For discharges to receiving waters with a site-specific background pollutant criterion, the department will use the site-specific criterion in the calculation of a numeric water quality based effluent limit.

(B) The department will compare the calculated water quality based effluent limits to any applicable aquatic toxicity or technology based effluent limits and select the most conservative for inclusion in the permit conditions.

(g) In addition to the water quality based effluent limits described in Section (6)(f), the department will calculate a mass-based limit where necessary to ensure that the condition described in Section (6)(c)(B) is met. Where mass-based limits are included, the permit shall specify how compliance with mass-based effluent limitations will be assessed.

(h) The permit shall include a provision requiring the department to consider the re-opening of the permit and re-evaluation of the site-specific background pollutant criterion if new information shows the discharger no longer meets the conditions described in subsections (6)(c) and (e).

(i) Public Notification Requirements.

(A) If the department proposes to grant a site-specific background pollutant criterion, it must provide public notice of the proposal and hold a public hearing. The public notice may be included in the public notification of a draft NPDES permit or other draft regulatory decision that would rely on the criterion and will also be published on the water quality standards website;

(B) The department will publish a list of all site-specific background pollutant criteria approved pursuant to this rule. A criterion will be added to this list within 30 days of its effective date. The list will identify: the permittee; the site-specific background pollutant criterion and the associated risk level; the waterbody to which the criterion applies; the allowable pollutant effluent limit; and how to obtain additional information about the criterion.

(7) Arsenic Reduction Policy: The inorganic arsenic criterion for the protection of human health from the combined consumption of organisms and drinking water is 2.1 micrograms per liter. While this criterion is protective of human health and more stringent than the federal maximum contaminant level (MCL) for arsenic in drinking water, which is 10 micrograms per liter, it nonetheless is based on a higher risk level than the Commission has used to establish other human health criteria. This higher risk level recognizes that much of the risk is due to naturally high levels of inorganic arsenic in Oregon’s waterbodies. In order to maintain the lowest human health risk from inorganic arsenic in drinking water, the Commission has determined that it is appropriate to adopt the following policy to limit the human contribution to that risk.

(a) The arsenic reduction policy established by this rule section does not become applicable for purposes of ORS chapter 468B or the federal Clean Water Act unless and until the numeric arsenic criteria established by this rule are approved by EPA pursuant to 40 CFR 131.21 (4/27/2000).

(b) It is the policy of the Commission that the addition of inorganic arsenic from new or existing anthropogenic sources to waters of the state within a surface water drinking water protection area be reduced the maximum amount feasible. The requirements of this rule section (OAR 340-041-0033(4**7**)) apply to sources that discharge to surface waters of the state with an ambient inorganic arsenic concentration equal to or lower than the applicable numeric inorganic arsenic criteria for the protection of human health.

(c) The following definitions apply to this section (OAR 340-041-0033(4**7**)):

(A) “Add inorganic arsenic” means to discharge a net mass of inorganic arsenic from a point source (the mass of inorganic arsenic discharged minus the mass of inorganic arsenic taken into the facility from a surface water source).

(B) A “surface water drinking water protection area,” for the purpose of this section, means an area delineated as such by DEQ under the source water assessment program of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. ¦ 300j 13. The areas are delineated for the purpose of protecting public or community drinking water supplies that use surface water sources. These delineations can be found at DEQ’s drinking water program website.

(C) “Potential to significantly increase inorganic arsenic concentrations in the public drinking water supply source water” means:

(i) to increase the concentration of inorganic arsenic in the receiving water for a discharge by 10 percent or more after mixing with the harmonic mean flow of the receiving water; or

(ii) as an alternative, if sufficient data are available, the discharge will increase the concentration of inorganic arsenic in the surface water intake water of a public water system by 0.021 micrograms per liter or more based on a mass balance calculation.

(d) Following the effective date of this rule, applications for an individual NPDES permit or permit renewal received from industrial dischargers located in a surface water drinking water protection area and identified by DEQ as likely to add inorganic arsenic to the receiving water must include sufficient data to enable DEQ to determine whether:

(A) The discharge in fact adds inorganic arsenic; and

(B) The discharge has the potential to significantly increase inorganic arsenic concentrations in the public drinking water supply source water.

(e) Where DEQ determines that both conditions in subsection (d) of this section (4**7**) are true, the industrial discharger must develop an inorganic arsenic reduction plan and propose all feasible measures to reduce its inorganic arsenic loading to the receiving water. The proposed plan, including proposed measures, monitoring and reporting requirements, and a schedule for those actions, will be described in the fact sheet and incorporated into the source’s NPDES permit after public comment and DEQ review and approval. In developing the plan, the source must:

(A) Identify how much it can minimize its inorganic arsenic discharge through pollution prevention measures, process changes, wastewater treatment, alternative water supply (for groundwater users) or other possible pollution prevention and/or control measures;

(B) Evaluate the costs, feasibility and environmental impacts of the potential inorganic arsenic reduction and control measures;

(C) Estimate the predicted reduction in inorganic arsenic and the reduced human health risk expected to result from the control measures;

(D) Propose specific inorganic arsenic reduction or control measures, if feasible, and an implementation schedule; and

(E) Propose monitoring and reporting requirements to document progress in plan implementation and the inorganic arsenic load reductions.

(f) In order to implement this section, DEQ will develop the following information and guidance within 120 days of the effective date of this rule and periodically update it as warranted by new information:

(A) A list of industrial sources or source categories, including industrial stormwater and sources covered by general permits, that are likely to add inorganic arsenic to surface waters of the State.

(i) For industrial sources or source categories permitted under a general permit that have been identified by DEQ as likely sources of inorganic arsenic, DEQ will evaluate options for reducing inorganic arsenic during permit renewal or evaluation of Stormwater Pollution Control Plans.

(B) Quantitation limits for monitoring inorganic arsenic concentrations.

(C) Information and guidance to assist sources in estimating, pursuant to subsection (e)(C) of this section, the reduced human health risk expected to result from inorganic arsenic control measures based on the most current EPA risk assessment.

(g) It is the policy of the Commission that landowners engaged in agricultural or development practices on land where pesticides, fertilizers, or soil amendments containing arsenic are currently being or have previously been applied, implement conservation practices to minimize the erosion and runoff of inorganic arsenic to waters of the State or to a location where such material could readily migrate into waters of the State.

[ED. NOTE: Tables referencing the toxics criteria are not included in rule text. Click here for a PDF copy of Table 30: Aquatic Life Water Quality Criteria for Toxic Pollutants. Click here for a PDF copy of Table 40: Human Health Water Quality Criteria for Toxic Pollutants. Click here for a PDF copy of Table 31: Aquatic Life Water Quality Guidance Values for Toxic Pollutants]

Stat. Auth.: ORS 468.020, 468B.030, 468B.035 & 468B.048  
Stats. Implemented: ORS 468B.030, 468B.035 & 468B.048  
Hist.: DEQ 17-2003, f. & cert. ef. 12-9-03; DEQ 3-2004, f. & cert. ef. 5-28-04; DEQ 17-2010, f. & cert. ef. 12-21-10; DEQ 8-2011, f. & cert. ef. 6-30-11; DEQ 10-2011, f. & cert. ef. 7-13-11

**340-041-0009**

**Bacteria**

(1) Numeric Criteria: Organisms of the coliform group commonly associated with fecal sources (MPN or equivalent membrane filtration using a representative number of samples) may not exceed the criteria described in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this paragraph:

(a) Freshwaters and Estuarine Waters Other than Shellfish Growing Waters:

(A) A 30-day log mean of 126 E. coli organisms per 100 milliliters, based on a minimum of five (5) samples;

(B) No single sample may exceed 406 E. coli organisms per 100 milliliters.

(b) Marine Waters and Estuarine Shellfish Growing Waters: A fecal coliform median concentration of 14 organisms per 100 milliliters, with not more than ten percent of the samples exceeding 43 organisms per 100 ml.

(2) Raw Sewage Prohibition: No sewage may be discharged into or in any other manner be allowed to enter the waters of the State, unless such sewage has been treated in a manner approved by the Department or otherwise allowed by these rules;

(3) Animal Waste: Runoff contaminated with domesticated animal wastes must be minimized and treated to the maximum extent practicable before it is allowed to enter waters of the State;

(4) Bacterial pollution or other conditions deleterious to waters used for domestic purposes, livestock watering, irrigation, bathing, or shellfish propagation, or otherwise injurious to public health may not be allowed;

(5) Effluent Limitations for Bacteria: Except as allowed in subsection (c) of this section, upon NPDES permit renewal or issuance, or upon request for a permit modification by the permittee at an earlier date, effluent discharges to freshwaters, and estuarine waters other than shellfish growing waters may not exceed a monthly log mean of 126 E. coli organisms per 100 ml. No single sample may exceed 406 E. coli organisms per 100 ml. However, no violation will be found, for an exceedance if the permittee takes at least five consecutive re-samples at four-hour intervals beginning as soon as practicable (preferably within 28 hours) after the original sample was taken and the log mean of the five re-samples is less than or equal to 126 E. coli. The following conditions apply:

(a) If the Department finds that re-sampling within the timeframe outlined in this section would pose an undue hardship on a treatment facility, a more convenient schedule may be negotiated in the permit, provided that the permittee demonstrates that the sampling delay will result in no increase in the risk to water contact recreation in waters affected by the discharge;

(b) The aquatic life criteria for chlorine established in the water quality toxic substances rule under OAR 340-041-0033 must be met at all times outside the assigned mixing zone;

(c) For sewage treatment plants that are authorized to use recycled water pursuant to OAR 340, division 55, and that also use a storage pond as a means to dechlorinate their effluent prior to discharge to public waters, effluent limitations for bacteria may, upon request by the permittee, be based upon appropriate total coliform limits as required by OAR 340, division 55:

(i) Class C limitations: No two consecutive samples may exceed 240 total coliform per 100 milliliters.

(ii) Class A and Class B limitations: No single sample may exceed 23 total coliform per 100 milliliters.

(iii) No violation will be found for an exceedance under this paragraph if the permittee takes at least five consecutive re-samples at four hour intervals beginning as soon as practicable (preferably within 28 hours) after the original sample(s) were taken; and in the case of Class C recycled water, the log mean of the five re-samples is less than or equal to 23 total coliform per 100 milliliters or, in the case of Class A and Class B recycled water, if the log mean of the five re-samples is less than or equal to 2.2 total coliform per 100 milliliters.

(6) Sewer Overflows in winter: Domestic waste collection and treatment facilities are prohibited from discharging raw sewage to waters of the State during the period of November 1 through May 21, except during a storm event greater than the one-in-five-year, 24-hour duration storm. However, the following exceptions apply:

(a) The Commission may on a case-by-case basis approve a bacteria control management plan to be prepared by the permittee, for a basin or specified geographic area which describes hydrologic conditions under which the numeric bacteria criteria would be waived. These plans will identify the specific hydrologic conditions, identify the public notification and education processes that will be followed to inform the public about an event and the plan, describe the water quality assessment conducted to determine bacteria sources and loads associated with the specified hydrologic conditions, and describe the bacteria control program that is being implemented in the basin or specified geographic area for the identified sources;

(b) Facilities with separate sanitary and storm sewers existing on January 10, 1996, and which currently experience sanitary sewer overflows due to inflow and infiltration problems, must submit an acceptable plan to the Department at the first permit renewal, which describes actions that will be taken to assure compliance with the discharge prohibition by January 1, 2010. Where discharges occur to a receiving stream with sensitive beneficial uses, the Department may negotiate a more aggressive schedule for discharge elimination;

(c) On a case-by-case basis, the beginning of winter may be defined as October 15, if the permittee so requests and demonstrates to the Department's satisfaction that the risk to beneficial uses, including water contact recreation, will not be increased due to the date change.

(7) Sewer Overflows in summer: Domestic waste collection and treatment facilities are prohibited from discharging raw sewage to waters of the State during the period of May 22 through October 31, except during a storm event greater than the one-in-ten-year, 24-hour duration storm. The following exceptions apply:

(a) For facilities with combined sanitary and storm sewers, the Commission may on a case-by-case basis approve a bacteria control management plan such as that described in subsection (6)(a) of this rule;

(b) On a case-by-case basis, the beginning of summer may be defined as June 1 if the permittee so requests and demonstrates to the Department's satisfaction that the risk to beneficial uses, including water contact recreation, will not be increased due to the date change;

(c) For discharge sources whose permit identifies the beginning of summer as any date from May 22 through May 31: If the permittee demonstrates to the Department's satisfaction that an exceedance occurred between May 21 and June 1 because of a sewer overflow, and that no increase in risk to beneficial uses, including water contact recreation, occurred because of the exceedance, no violation may be triggered, if the storm associated with the overflow was greater than the one-in-five-year, 24-hour duration storm.

(8) Storm Sewers Systems Subject to Municipal NPDES Stormwater Permits: Best management practices must be implemented for permitted storm sewers to control bacteria to the maximum extent practicable. In addition, a collection-system evaluation must be performed prior to permit issuance or renewal so that illicit and cross connections are identified. Such connections must be removed upon identification. A collection system evaluation is not required where the Department determines that illicit and cross connections are unlikely to exist.

(9) Storm Sewers Systems Not Subject to Municipal NPDES Stormwater Permits: A collection system evaluation must be performed of non-permitted storm sewers by January 1, 2005, unless the Department determines that an evaluation is not necessary because illicit and cross connections are unlikely to exist. Illicit and cross-connections must be removed upon identification.

(10) Water Quality Limited for Bacteria: In those water bodies, or segments of water bodies identified by the Department as exceeding the relevant numeric criteria for bacteria in the basin standards and designated as water-quality limited under section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, the requirements specified in section 11 of this rule and in OAR 340-041-0061(11) must apply.

(11) In water bodies designated by the Department as water-quality limited for bacteria, and in accordance with priorities established by the Department, development and implementation of a bacteria management plan may be required of those sources that the Department determines to be contributing to the problem. The Department may determine that a plan is not necessary for a particular stream segment or segments within a water-quality limited basin based on the contribution of the segment(s) to the problem. The bacteria management plans will identify the technologies, best management practices and/or measures and approaches to be implemented by point and nonpoint sources to limit bacterial contamination. For point sources, their National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit is their bacteria management plan. For nonpoint sources, the bacteria management plan will be developed by designated management agencies (DMAs) which will identify the appropriate best management practices or measures and approaches.

Stat. Auth.: ORS 468.020, 468B.030, 468B.035 & 468B.048  
Stats. Implemented: ORS 468B.030, 468B.035 & 468B.048  
Hist.: DEQ 17-2003, f. & cert. ef. 12-9-03; DEQ 6-2008, f. & cert. ef. 5-5-08; DEQ 10-2011, f. & cert. ef. 7-13-11

**340-040-0020**

**General Policies**

(1) Groundwater is a critical natural resource providing domestic, industrial, and agricultural water supply; and other legitimate beneficial uses; and also providing base flow for rivers, lakes, streams, and wetlands.

(2) Groundwater, once polluted, is difficult and sometimes impossible to clean up. Therefore, the EQC shall employ an anti-degradation policy to emphasize the prevention of groundwater pollution, and to control waste discharges to groundwater so that the highest possible water quality is maintained.

(3) All groundwaters of the state shall be protected from pollution that could impair existing or potential beneficial uses for which the natural water quality of the groundwater is adequate. Among the recognized beneficial uses of groundwater, domestic water supply is recognized as being the use that would usually require the highest level of water quality. Existing high quality groundwaters which exceed those levels necessary to support recognized and legitimate beneficial uses shall be maintained except as provided for in these rules.

(4) Numerical groundwater quality reference levels and guidance levels are listed in **Tables 1 through 3** of this Division. These levels have been obtained from the Safe Drinking Water Act, and indicate when groundwater may not be suitable for human consumption or when the aesthetic quality of groundwater may be impaired. They will be used by the Department and the public to evaluate the significance of a particular contaminant concentration, and will trigger necessary regulatory action. These levels should not be construed as acceptable groundwater quality goals because it is the policy of the EQC to maintain and preserve the highest possible water quality.

(5) For pollutant parameters for which numerical groundwater quality reference levels or guidance levels have not been established, or for evaluating adverse impacts on beneficial uses other than human consumption, the Department shall make use of the most current and scientifically valid information available in determining at what levels pollutants may affect present or potential beneficial uses. Such information shall include, but not be limited to, values set forth in OAR 340-041-0033 .

(6) The Department shall develop, implement and conduct a comprehensive groundwater quality protection program. The program shall contain strategies and methods for problem prevention, problem abatement and the control of both point and nonpoint sources of groundwater pollution. The Department shall seek the assistance of federal, state, and local governments in implementing the program.

(7) In order to assure maximum reasonable protection of public health, the public shall be informed that groundwater, and most particularly local flow systems or water table aquifers, may not be suitable for human consumption due either to natural or human-caused pollution problems, and shall not be assumed to be safe for domestic use unless quality testing demonstrates a safe supply. The Department shall work cooperatively with the Water Resources Department and the Health Division in identifying areas where groundwater pollution may affect beneficial uses.

(8) It is the policy of the EQC that groundwater quality be protected throughout the state. The Department will concentrate its groundwater quality protection implementation efforts in areas where practices and activities have the greatest potential for degrading groundwater quality, and where potential groundwater quality pollution would have the greatest adverse impact on beneficial uses.

(9) The Department, as lead agency for groundwater quality protection, shall work cooperatively with the Water Resources Department, the lead agency for groundwater quantity management, to characterize the physical and chemical charac-teristics of the aquifers of the state. The Department will seek the assistance and cooperation of the Water Resources Department to design an ambient monitoring program adequate to determine representative groundwater quality for significant groundwater flow systems. The Department shall assist and cooperate with the Water Resources Department in its groundwater studies. The Department shall also seek the advice, assistance, and cooperation of local, state, and federal agencies to identify and resolve ground-water quality problems.

(10) It is the intent of the EQC to see that groundwater problems associated with areawide on-site sewage disposal are corrected by developing and implementing areawide abatement plans. In order to accomplish this, all available and appropriate statutory and administrative authorities will be utilized, including but not limited to: permits, special permit conditions, penalties, fines, EQC orders, compliance schedules, moratoriums, Department orders, and geographic area rules (OAR 340-071-0400). It is recognized, however, that in some cases the identification, evaluation and implementation of abatement measures may take time and that continued degradation may occur while the plan is being developed and implemented. The EQC may allow short-term continued degradation only if the beneficial uses, public health, and groundwater resources are not significantly affected, and only if the approved abatement plan is being implemented on a schedule approved by the Department.

(11) In order to minimize groundwater quality degradation potentially resulting from point source activities, point sources shall employ the highest and best practicable methods to prevent the movement of pollutants to groundwater. Among other factors, available technologies for treatment and waste reduction, cost effectiveness, site characteristics, pollutant toxicity and persistence, and state and federal regulations shall be considered in arriving at a case-by-case determination of highest and best practicable methods that protect public health and the environment.

(12) In regulating point source activities that could result in the disposal of wastes onto or into the ground in a manner which allows potential movement of pollutants to groundwater, the Department shall utilize all available and appropriate statutory and administrative authorities, including but not limited to: permits, fines, EQC orders, compliance schedules, moratoriums, Depart-ment orders, and geographic area rules. Groundwater quality protection requirements shall be implemented through the Department's Water Pollution Control Program, Solid Waste Disposal Program, On-Site Sewage Disposal System Construction Program, Hazardous Waste Facility (RCRA) Program, Underground Injection Control Program, Emergency Spill Response Program, or other programs, whichever is appropriate.

**Table 1**

**NUMERICAL GROUNDWATER QUALITY REFERENCE LEVELS: 1**

**Inorganic Contaminants -- Reference Level (mg/L)**

Arsenic -- 0.05

Barium -- 1.0

Cadmium -- 0.01

Chromium -- 0.05

Fluoride -- 4.0

Lead -- 0.05

Mercury -- 0.002

Nitrate-N -- 10.0

Selenium -- 0.01

Silver -- 0.05

1All reference levels are for total (unfiltered) concentrations unless otherwise specified by the Department.

**Table 2**

**NUMERICAL GROUNDWATER QUALITY REFERENCE LEVELS (Continued): 1**

**Organic Contaminants -- Reference Level (mg/L)**

Benzene -- 0.005

Carbon Tetrachloride -- 0.005

p-Dichlorobenzene -- 0.075

1,2-Dichloroethane -- 0.005

1,1-Dichloroethylene -- 0.007

1,1,1-Trichloroethane -- 0.200

Trichloroethylene -- 0.005

Total Trihalomethanes -- 0.100

(the sum of concentrations bromodichloromethane, dibromochloromethane, tribromomethane (bromoform), and trichloromethane (chloroform))

Vinyl Chloride -- 0.002

2,4-D -- 0.100

Endrin -- 0.0002

Lindane -- 0.004

Methoxychlor -- 0.100

Toxaphene -- 0.005

2,4,5-TP Silvex -- 0.010

1All reference levels are for total (unfiltered) concentrations unless otherwise specified by the Department.

**Table 3**

**NUMERICAL GROUNDWATER QUALITY GUIDANCE LEVELS: 1**

**Miscellaneous Contaminants -- Guidance Level (mg/L) 2**

Chloride -- 250

Color -- 15 Color Units

Copper -- 1.0

Foaming agents -- 0.5

Iron -- 0.3

Manganese -- 0.05

Odor -- 3 Threshold odor number

pH -- 6.5-8.5

Sulfate -- 250

Total dissolved solids -- 500

Zinc -- 5.0

1All guidance levels except total dissolved solids and are for total (unfiltered) concentrations unless otherwise specified by the Department.

2Unless otherwise specified, except pH.

Stat. Auth.: [ORS 468](http://landru.leg.state.or.us/ors/468.html) & [ORS 468](http://landru.leg.state.or.us/ors/468.html)B  
Stats. Implemented: [ORS 468](http://landru.leg.state.or.us/ors/468.html).020, [ORS 468](http://landru.leg.state.or.us/ors/468.html).035, [ORS 468](http://landru.leg.state.or.us/ors/468.html)B.155 & ORS 468B.165  
Hist.: DEQ 24-1981, f. & ef. 9-8-81; DEQ 13-1984, f. & ef. 7-13-84; DEQ 27-1989, f. & cert. ef. 10-27-89; Renumbered from 340-041-0029; DEQ 4-1996, f. & cert. ef. 3-7-96

**340-040-0080**

**Numerical Groundwater Quality Reference Levels and Guidance Levels**

(1) The numerical groundwater quality reference levels and guidance levels contained in **Tables 1 through 3** of this Division are to be considered by the Department and the public in weighing the significance of a particular chemical concentration, and in determining the level of remedial action necessary to restore contaminated groundwater for human consumption. They are not to be construed as acceptable groundwater quality management goals. They are to be used by the Director and the EQC in establishing permit-specific and remedial action concentration limits according to the requirements of OAR 340-040-0030 through 340-040-0060.

(2) The Department shall periodically review information as it becomes available for establishing new numerical groundwater quality reference levels and guidance levels, and to ensure consistency with other statutorily mandated standards.

(3) Human consumption is recognized as the highest and best use of groundwater, and the use which usually requires the highest level of water quality. The numerical groundwater quality reference levels listed in **Tables 1**and**2** of this Division reflect the suitability of groundwater for human consumption.

(4) The numerical groundwater quality guidance levels listed in **Table 3** of this Division are for contaminants which do not adversely impact human health at the given concentrations. At considerably higher concentrations, human health implications may exist. These guidance levels are for contaminants that primarily affect the aesthetic qualities relating to the public acceptance of drinking water. The aesthetic degradation of groundwater may impair its beneficial use.

(5) For pollutant parameters for which numerical ground-water quality reference levels or guidance levels have not been established and listed in **Tables 1 through 3**, or for evaluating adverse impacts on beneficial uses other than human consumption, the Department shall make use of the most current and scientifically valid information available in determining at what levels pollutants may affect present or potential beneficial uses. Such information shall include, but not be limited to, values set forth in OAR 340-041-0033.

Stat. Auth.: [ORS 468](http://landru.leg.state.or.us/ors/468.html) & [ORS 468](http://landru.leg.state.or.us/ors/468.html)B  
Stats. Implemented: [ORS 468](http://landru.leg.state.or.us/ors/468.html).020, [ORS 468](http://landru.leg.state.or.us/ors/468.html).035, [ORS 468](http://landru.leg.state.or.us/ors/468.html)B.155 & ORS 468B.165  
Hist.: DEQ 24-1981, f. & ef. 9-8-81; DEQ 13-1984, f. & ef. 7-13-84; DEQ 27-1989, f. & cert. ef. 10-27-89; Renumbered from 340-041-0029