



2026 Water Quality Fee Rulemaking

Advisory Committee Charter

Rulemaking Contact: Jason Simpson
Nov. 19, 2025



Non-discrimination statement

DEQ does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status in the administration of its programs and activities.

For translation or other formats, visit DEQ's [Civil Rights and Environmental Justice page](#).

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Objectives and scope

Objectives

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is reviewing Water Quality Program permit fees to ensure sufficient funding to maintain and effectively operate the state's water quality permitting programs. A fee increase will enable DEQ to continue providing essential services to regulated entities and fulfill the Water Quality Program's mission to protect and enhance Oregon's water quality. DEQ convened this advisory committee to provide input on the proposed fee increases.

Under ORS 468.065 and ORS 468B.050, DEQ may propose rule amendments – no more than once each calendar year - for Environmental Quality Commission adoption to adjust fees for water quality permits. The annual increase may not exceed either:

- The anticipated increase in the cost of administering the permit program, or
- Three percent, whichever is lower,
- Unless a larger increase is authorized in the DEQ's legislatively approved budget.

DEQ intends to present these proposed fee rule amendments to EQC for consideration at the March 2026 meeting.

This rulemaking will engage a range of interested parties and public representatives to evaluate and, as necessary, provide policy recommendations for revisions to Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 340, Divisions 45, 48, 49 and 71 under the authority of ORS 468B.051.

The Water Quality Programs included in this rulemaking are:

- Stormwater Permitting Program (Individual and General permits)
- Water Pollution Control Facility Permitting Program
- National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems Permitting Program
- General Permits (WPCF and NPDES)
- Onsite Septic System Permitting Program
- Dredge and Fill Certification Program
- Wastewater System Operator Certification Program
- Underground Injection Control - Rule Authorizations
- Residential Onsite Septic Program

Note: This rulemaking does not include placer mining general permit, also called 700PM, fees authorized by ORS 468B.118.

Fiscal and economic impact

ORS 183.333 requires that DEQ ask the committee to consider the fiscal and economic impact of the proposed rules including:

- Whether the rules will have a fiscal impact, and if so, what the extent of that impact will be.
- Whether the rules will have a significant adverse impact on small businesses, and if so, how DEQ can reduce the rules' negative fiscal impact on small businesses.

Roles

DEQ facilitator

The facilitator's role is to:

- Encourage open, candid, and constructive dialogue
- Begin and conclude meetings and agenda items on time
- Foster innovation by ensuring all ideas are heard and considered
- Track and document ideas throughout the consensus process; and recognize when discussions move beyond the meeting scope and guide the group back to the intended focus

Committee members

Advisory committee members are expected to attend the Rules Advisory Committee meeting on Nov. 19, 2025. If the committee is unable to fully address the proposed rulemaking during this meeting, DEQ will schedule an additional meeting. An alternate may be designated if needed. Each committee member is responsible for fully briefing their alternate on all relevant issues and prior committee discussions to ensure the meeting objectives are met. If a member's absence is unavoidable, the DEQ project manager must be notified in advance.

The role of a committee member is to:

- Prepare and set aside time for the meetings
- Provide DEQ project manager with copies of relevant research and documentation cited during the meeting
- Stay focused on the specific agenda topics
- Comment constructively and in good faith
- Use expertise from the communities you represent to address proposed fee rulemaking
- Treat everyone and their opinions with respect
- Allows one person to speak at a time
- Avoid sidebar discussions
- Avoid representing to the public or media the views of any other committee member or the committee

Non-committee members

Individuals who attend the committee meetings but are not members of the committee serve as observers and do not actively participate in discussions. If non-committee members are present, DEQ may provide time at the end of the meeting for public comments.

DEQ staff support

DEQ staff are committed to making the most effective use of committee member's time by:

- Establishing clear committee goals, meeting objectives, and agendas
- Providing committee members with a designated DEQ point of contact for communications
- Encouraging full participation by all members in discussions

- Clearly describing members' roles, the committee timeline, the level of agreement expected, and how member input will be used

DEQ support and website

DEQ will post the meeting agenda and related materials on the advisory committee webpage at least one week in advance of the meeting. DEQ administrative staff will prepare meeting summaries that capture committee discussions, key perspectives, and member input. DEQ will not prepare a formal committee report. Draft meeting summaries will be distributed to the advisory committee for review. Final meeting minutes will be posted on the advisory committee webpage and will become part of the public record.

The advisory committee charter, a full roster of the committee, meeting agendas and minutes, and background materials will all be located on the [advisory committee web page](#).

Committee meetings

1. All committee meetings will be:
 - Open to the public DEQ may provide time at the end of the meeting for public comments
 - Advertised on DEQ's online calendar at least two weeks prior to the meeting
 - Announced through [DEQ email](#) to the Water Quality GovDelivery list
 - Posted on DEQ's Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) accounts
 - Accessible via call-in number or webinar
2. The committee is expected to meet once in a virtual format. If committee members are unable to fully address this proposed rulemaking during the first meeting, DEQ will schedule an additional.
3. Meeting materials and agenda will be posted on the [advisory committee web page](#).

Decision making

DEQ will use the committee's discussions and input to form the draft rule. The draft rule will later be released for broader public review and comment as part of DEQ's formal rulemaking process.

When DEQ provides information to the committee, members will be given a reasonable amount of time to review the materials and provide comments.

Membership

In convening this committee, DEQ selected members to represent the broad range of interested parties that the proposed rules may affect, both directly and indirectly. Committee representatives are expected to consider the policy, fiscal, and economic impacts of the proposed fee increases on the businesses or organizations they represent. A committee member roster is available on the [advisory committee web page](#).

Travel expenses

No travel expenses are expected to accrue due to virtual meeting format.

Public records and confidentiality

Committee communications and records – including formal documents, discussion drafts, meeting summaries and exhibits - are public records and available for public inspection and copying. DEQ does not assume responsibility for protecting proprietary or confidential business information that may be shared during committee or subcommittee meetings. Personal or private documents belonging to individual committee members generally are not considered public records unless copies are provided to or maintained by DEQ.

Information exchange

Committee members will provide materials and information as far in advance as possible of the meeting at which the information will be discussed or used. Members are expected to share all relevant information with one another to the greatest extent possible. If a member believes certain information is proprietary, the member should provide a general description of the information along with an explanation of why it cannot be shared in full.

Public involvement

All meetings will be open to the public. If non-committee members attend, DEQ may provide time at the end of the meeting for public comments.

Once the committee process concludes, DEQ will develop draft rules and initiate the formal public rulemaking process. This process will include a designated public comment period during which anyone can submit written feedback on the proposed rules. DEQ will also hold a public hearing to accept both written and verbal comments. Individual committee members are welcome to provide comments on the full draft rule during this period. Based on input received, DEQ may revise the proposed rules before presenting a final version to the EQC for consideration at the March 2026 meeting.

DEQ contacts

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