

2007-2010 Triennial Review

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Residues Fact Sheet

What are residues?

Residues are defined as floating solids, debris, sludge, deposits, foam, scum, or any other material or substance remaining in a water body as a result of direct or nearby human activity. Alaska's Water Quality Standards (WQS) for residues address substances that are not dissolved in the wastewater and may remain in the waterbody for some period of time.

Examples of residues include foam from seafood processing facilities, seafood processor waste that settles to the bottom and decomposes rapidly, and bark waste at log transfer facilities that decomposes slowly. Some residues may contain toxic substances which are also addressed by other water quality criteria. Other residues may be biodegradable or may create a suitable surface for new aquatic life communities over time.

What is the proposal?

The proposed changes conform to narrative criteria recommended by the Environmental Protection Agency. The intent of the proposed change is to ensure consistency with the federal Clean Water Act and to clarify the protection of designated uses.

Who would be affected?

- Seafood processors, log transfer facilities, and other wastewater dischargers could be affected because they have permitted residues discharges
- public water users

How are the criteria used?

The residue criteria are used for:

- wastewater discharge permitting and compliance;
- water body assessment where the Department evaluates whether a waterbody supports the designated uses of the waters;
- waterbody recovery plans; and
- enforcement actions for water quality violations.

What's next?

The public comment period ends January 12, 2011. If you have questions about the changes, please contact Carl Reese at Carl.Reese@Alaska.gov. Additional information is available on the DEC website at:

<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/water/wqsar/wqs/index.htm>.