

Ground Rules



In August, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that it had withdrawn the proposed rule that would have revised effluent limits for construction site runoff. The agency, however, will roll out a new rule proposal this fall, according to EPA Office of Wastewater Management staffer Jeremy Bauer. A public comment period will follow, with final rule issuance expected by November 2012.

The rule to come will encourage the creation of new—storm strength-based, for instance—performance standards for new construction and redevelopment sites. It also will be designed to

expand the scope of the MS4 program and protect the Chesapeake Bay watershed, among other goals. For more information on the rule and its provisions, visit www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/rulemaking.

Some groups are pleased with these regulatory developments. Associations representing home builders and general contractors, for example, have been fighting for the EPA to reconsider a nationwide cap, questioning its foundational data and projected compliance costs.

Still others within the storm water and erosion control industry look forward to the potential establishment of a clear-cut, enforceable numeric limit as a means of ensuring water quality.

It has been a long and bumpy road for numeric limit proposals thus far, but I believe that common ground will be found. Why? Because most anyone involved in this debate shares the same objective: to control the discharge of pollutants from construction sites and protect the water bodies we and future generations depend on. What it comes down to is agreeing on a practicable way to hold site owners and operators accountable for taking the steps necessary to uphold their end of the storm water management bargain.

The *Storm Water Solutions* editorial staff would like to hear your thoughts on this timely issue. Please share your feedback via an e-mail to swseditor@sgcmail.com or on our social media pages.

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