Association of Clean Water Administrators

2026 National NPDES Program Efficiency Workshop

Virtual Meeting
November 4 – 6, 2026

PURPOSE

The 2026 National NPDES Program Efficiency Workshop supports implementation of EPA and state NPDES permitting programs nationwide by highlighting administrative efficiencies, sharing best management practices, showcasing innovative state approaches, improving data quality, highlighting technologies, facilitating coregulator discussions, and identifying challenges and barriers. Program areas considered for the workshop include jurisdictional determination, permit application, public comment process, permit development, monitoring and reporting, data management, inspections, and violation/response.

ATTENDEES

The 2026 National NPDES Program Efficiency Workshop is a virtual meeting intended to provide for comprehensive and diverse participation. Attendees should include:

- State, interstate, territory, and EPA program managers, permit writers, data stewards, inspectors, compliance staff, and any other staff involved in NPDES program implementation
- Partnering state and federal agency staff that provide technical and/or regulatory assistance to the NPDES program
- Invited guests

SPECIAL THANKS TO INDIVIDUALS THAT COMPLETED THE PREMEETING SURVEY AND VOLUNTEERED TO PRESENT!!

Wednesday, November 4, 2026

This meeting is only open to States, EPA co-regulators, and invited guests. All meeting times are Eastern time zone.

12:00 PM – 12:15 PM
Plenary

Welcome & Opening Remarks
Sean Rolland, Deputy Director, Association of Clean Water Administrators
Kevin Weiss, Office of Water, Environmental Protection Agency

12:15 PM – 12:45 PM
Plenary

Session 1: ACWA Survey – Is an NPDES Permit Needed?
Sean Rolland, Deputy Director, Association of Clean Water Administrators
Heidi Travers, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

12:45 PM – 1:30 PM
Reginal Breakouts

Regional Break Out 1: Is an NPDES Permit Needed?
Please join your regional breakout room for discussions. A transcription tool will be taking notes to develop a summary of recommendations after the meeting. Individual attribution will be removed.

Q1. What resources do you most depend on for determining whether an NPDES permit is required?

Q2. Does your state currently have (or will your state consider) a separate state permitting program for current NPDES facilities that wish to leave the NPDES program due to WOTUS changes? How many facilities in your state might be impacted by an updated definition for WOTUS?

Q3. Are there resources you think the Administration (vs the State) could provide that would assist with a faster response on whether a facility needs an NPDES permit or not?

Q4. Other related discussion topics while time permits.

1:30 PM – 2:45 PM
Plenary

Session 2: NPDES Permit Applications and Notices of Intent
Melissa Sandborn, Michigan Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy

2:45 PM – 3:00 PM

Break

3:00 PM – 4:15 PM
Plenary

Session 3: NPDES Tools, Templates, Policies to Help Permit Writers
Ben Hucka, Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Ian Willard, Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Ashley Grupe, Missouri Department of Natural Resources

4:15 PM – 5:00 PM
Reginal Breakouts

Regional Break Out 2: Applications, NOIs, Tools, and Policies
Please join your regional breakout room for discussions. A transcription tool will be taking notes to develop a summary of recommendations after the meeting. Individual attribution will be removed.

Q1. What are the biggest challenges in your state's current approach to getting to application completion?

Q2. If resources were not an obstacle, how would you use technology to further streamline application/NOI completion, review, and/or initial permit development?

Q3. In what ways would you improve communication with the permittee and the public prior to and during the draft/proposed permit phase?

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Q4. Other important related discussion topics while time permits.

5:00 PM **Adjourn**

Thursday, November 5, 2026

This meeting is only open to States, EPA co-regulators, and invited guests. All meeting times are Eastern time zone.

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM **Session 4: Public Comment Collection and Review**
Plenary
Eric Lachermyer, South Carolina Department of Environmental Services
ePermitting for Public Comment

Rachel Tucker, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
EngagementHQ (Granicus) for Public Comment

Lisa Cochran, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
SmartComments for Public Comment

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM **Session 5: Monitoring and Reporting Policy and Tools**
Plenary
Corin Hammond, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
Luke Scannell, Montana Department of Environmental Quality

2:30 PM – 3:15 PM **Regional Break Out 3: Monitoring, Reporting, and Analysis**
Reginal Breakouts
Please join your regional breakout room for discussions. A transcription tool will be taking notes to develop a summary of recommendations after the meeting. Individual attribution will be removed.

Q1. What have you found to be the strongest, most compelling, argument for increased monitoring and reporting requirements in a renewed NPDES permit?

Q2. Has your state considered/implemented dynamic monitoring and reporting requirements in permits that provide flexibility based on what is found in previous monitoring periods?

Q3. Does your state have an automated process for communicating with the permittee that a monitoring/reporting deadline is approaching or has passed?

Q4. Other related discussion topics while time permits.

3:15 PM – 3:30 PM **Break**

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM **Session 6: Inspections, Data, Violations, and Response**
Plenary
Christoph Quasney & Zack Robinson, Virgina Department of Environmental Quality
Melissa Sandborn, Michigan Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy

5:00 PM **Adjourn**

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Friday, November 6, 2026

This meeting is only open to States, EPA co-regulators, and invited guests. All meeting times are Eastern time zone.

12:00 PM – 1:15 PM
Plenary

Session 8: More NPDES Program Efficiencies
Jeff Navarro, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

Roundtable Discussion:
1. Q1. Is your state considering any future programmatic/technology updates that you think will help make the NPDES program more efficient?

2. Do you have any current tools you would like to demo for your peers that would help to further contribute to this conversation?

1:15 PM – 2:00 PM
Reginal Breakouts

Regional Break Out 4: Embracing Challenges to Advance the Program
Please join your regional breakout room for discussions. A transcription tool will be taking notes to develop a summary of recommendations after the meeting. Individual attribution will be removed.

Q1. Where compliance history has been an issue, what types of responses and/or future permit modifications have been most successful?

Q2. Are there areas within the NPDES program where you think more prescriptive/flexible program elements would help reduce permit challenges and risk of litigation?

Q3. Are there areas related to the NPDES program where you think more research/data would help reduce/mitigate permit challenges and litigation?

Q4. Other related discussion topics while time permits.

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Plenary

Session 9: How Water Utilities Can Use Innovation to Improve Performance
Matt Klein, Delta Bravo, Aquaspec

3:00 PM – 3:15 PM

Break

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM
Plenary

Session 10: How AI Can help Regulators
Kelly Whitlock, South Carolina Department of Environmental Services
John Inniger, Delta Bravo, PermitPro
Will Rensmith, Windsor Solutions

4:30 PM – 5:00 PM
Plenary

Roundtable Discussions
Facilitators:
Sean Rolland, Deputy Director, Association of Clean Water Administrators
Kevin Weiss, Office of Water, Environmental Protection Agency

Q1. What resources could EPA, ACWA, or the private sector make available, or invest in, that you think would help make the NPDES program more efficient?

Q2. What topics would you like to see covered in a future ACWA meeting/webinar?

5:00 PM

Adjourn

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