

**ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES
FOR THE
WATER QUALITY STANDARDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

BACKGROUND

The Department of Environmental Services (DES) is responsible for implementing and keeping the Water Quality Standards (RSA 485-A and Env-Ws 1700) up to date. Frequent stakeholder input is valuable to DES for understanding the implications of existing and proposed regulations. Consequently, DES has convened a Water Quality Standards Advisory Committee (WQSAC) to solicit public input and informed discussion on focused issues from interested, qualified persons. The WQSAC was authorized to continue operating indefinitely by Executive Order 2011-7 on December 16, 2011 (attached). The purpose of this document is to outline the organizational principles under which the WQSAC operates.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES

- 1) Purpose. The WQSAC will provide stakeholder input to DES in formulating and drafting statutes, administrative rules, and agency guidance pertaining to water quality, and to facilitate uniform interpretation and application of surface water quality regulations and statutes.
- 2) Membership. Participation with the WQSAC is open to all interested stakeholders. Interested stakeholders will be added to a mailing list and notified of meetings by email. Due to the variety of water quality issues, the WQSAC will have participants from a variety of organizations and disciplines, including, but not limited to:
 - Federal agencies
 - State agencies
 - Industry
 - Municipalities
 - Consultants
 - Non-governmental organizations
 - Universities
- 3) Officers. The WQSAC will have a Chair and Vice Chair who are not employees of DES. These officers will be appointed by the Commissioner of DES after being nominated by at least one member of the WQSAC. The Chair and Vice Chair will have a term of two calendar years, and one additional term upon renomination.
- 4) Voting. No formal votes will be taken at meetings. Consensus among stakeholders is a

goal but not a requirement. The level of consensus that is desired is for all stakeholders to feel that they “can live with” the decision, recommendation, or approach. After the committee has had sufficient time for discussion on a topic, the Chair may ask for a straw-poll of stakeholders by a show of hands using this criterion.

- 5) Quorum. The WQSAC will not have a quorum requirement because no votes will be taken. Participants will attend meetings based on their interest in the topic to be discussed.
- 6) Subcommittees. Subcommittees may be formed as the need arises. A subcommittee for a particular topic would exist until its work is completed and reported to the WQSAC, and then would cease to exist.
- 7) Logistics. DES will provide logistical support to the WQSAC, to include meeting arrangements, agendas, meeting summaries, working documents, and so on.
- 8) Records. DES will prepare a summary of the major issues discussed after each meeting. The meeting summary will be distributed to the WQSAC by email with a request for any corrections. DES will use its discretion to revise the meeting summary as accurately as possible based on any comments received. The meeting summary will not be official minutes. DES will prepare a letter to the committee to explain a regulatory decision if the decision was significantly different from what the committee reasonably expected.