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PUBLIC COMMENT SOUGHT ON FUTURE OF VERMONT'S WATERS

June 29, 1984

*This modest ad appeared in the legal notice section of a number of Vermont newspapers in mid-June. You may have missed it, but the proposed State regulations could well be the most important water quality decision Vermont will make this decade.*

## PROPOSED STATE REGULATIONS

### EXPLANATION FOR CITIZENS

By law, every proposed regulation must be published for two successive weeks in newspapers of record approved by the Secretary of State. The first week's publication includes a concise summary of the proposed rule, as well as a brief summary of its effect on Vermonters. The second ad is briefer, listing only the title and subject of the rule, the agency and the agency contact.

The purpose of publishing these regulations is to give you a chance to respond, orally or in writing. The law also says the agency must hold a public hearing on a proposed regulation if 25 persons or an association having at least 25 members requests it in writing.

To get a copy of a rule or make suggestions to the agency, call or write the contact person listed below for each regulation. You can also make comments to the Legislative Committee which reviews regulations by contacting the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules, State House, Montpelier, VT 05602 (telephone: 828-2231).

### VOSHA RULES

Vermont Proposed Rule No. PC4-37

AGENCY: Department of Labor and Industry

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert McLeod, Manager of VOSHA, Dept. of Labor and Industry, 5 Court St., Montpelier, VT 05602; Phone 828-2765.

### WATER QUALITY STANDARDS

Vermont Proposed Rule No. 64-P40

AGENCY: Environmental Conservation — Water Resources Board

AGENCY'S REFERENCE NUMBER: none

CONCISE SUMMARY: The Vermont Water Quality Standards are the foundation of the state's water quality management efforts. These rules establish the water quality goals for all waters of the state by designating those beneficial values and uses which are to be obtained and maintained for each water body or

portion thereof and establish policy guidance and criteria necessary to protect these values and uses.

As proposed, these rules generally and substantively amend the current Water Quality Standards. These rules clarify existing policy and establish new policy in several areas. Major changes to the existing Water Quality Standards include: a new format, articulation of policies regarding when and where discharges may be allowed, priorities to be followed in allocating assimilative capacity, and expanded anti-degradation policy as well as provisions for mixing zones, storm-water management and nonpoint source wastes.

**TYPES OF PERSONS AFFECTED:** These rules affect virtually all persons, enterprises and governmental entities in Vermont. Those most directly affected include all persons, enterprises, and governmental entities including municipalities which use the waters of the state for one or more of the following purposes: public water supply, swimming, boating, fishing, other recreational uses, irrigation and agricultural uses, compatible industrial uses and the disposal of properly treated wastes.

**COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS:** All persons, enterprises and governmental entities which make use of, or derive economic gain as a result of, the existing and continued high quality of the waters of the state are benefited.

In general the proposed rules will not significantly change the economic impact that the Vermont Water Quality Standards have had historically. Under some circumstances those persons, enterprises and governmental entities that are presently, or maybe in the future, discharging wastes into waters of the state may either realize some costs-savings, or incur some additional expense, as a result of the proposed rules.

Such savings or additional expenses are most likely to be incurred by the following: municipalities which construct and operate publically owned treatment works, persons who dispose of their wastes by means of either publically or privately owned treatment works.

**SCHEDULED HEARING:** July 12, 1984, 10:00 a.m.; Pavilion Auditorium, 109 State Street, Montpelier.

**DEADLINE FOR COMMENTS:** July 20, 1984.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William A. Barlett, Executive Officer, State Office Building, Montpelier, VT 05602; Phone: 828-2871.

THE NEW STANDARDS WILL DETERMINE HOW CLEAN VERMONT'S WATERS  
— INCLUDING YOUR DRINKING WATER —  
WILL BE TOMORROW

The Vermont State Water Resources Board has drafted new water quality standards and will solicit citizen questions and comments at two upcoming public hearings on July 12th. The proposed standards regulate WHEN and WHERE DISCHARGES MAY BE PERMITTED, and specify the minimum level of water quality in physical, chemical and biological terms. The waters of Vermont are grouped into classes -- A (drinking water), B (fishable swimmable), and C (treated sewage discharge zones).

Your comments are needed in this important water protection matter. Please take the time to attend one of the two public hearings held by the Water Resources Board scheduled for Thursday, July 12. The first will be in Montpelier at 10 a.m. at the Pavilion Auditorium, 109 State Street. The second will be in Springfield at Springfield High School at 7:30 p.m.



The Water Resources Board, at our request, has extended the public comment period from 7 to 30 days in order to allow more public involvement. Two daytime public meetings to provide background on the standards have already been held.

Realizing that many people must work during the day, VNRC, the Connecticut River Watershed Council and other conservation groups will sponsor an evening information meeting on July 5th at 7:30 p.m. at the T.D. Bugbee Senior Citizens Center in White River Junction, located near the junction of North Main Street and Route 5. We have publicized this meeting elsewhere, knowing that this bulletin might not reach you in time for you to attend.

VNRC urges you to read the Draft Water Quality Standards and comment at one of the July 12 public hearings. And we have prepared an fact sheet to help you comment constructively on the proposed standards. For a copy of the standards call the office of William Bartlett, Executive Secretary of the Water Resources Board, Agency of Environmental Conservation in Montpelier, 828-2871. Contact VNRC, 223-2328 to obtain the fact sheet.

#### STRONG CLEAN WATER RENEWAL ACT PASSES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

On June 26, the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously voted to renew and amend the Clean Water Act. Environmental groups hailed the passage as showing that environmentalists and industrial organizations can work together. The bill represents a compromise reached after environmental groups strongly objected to the legislation originally reported by the House Public Works Committee.

Much credit for the new bill goes to those people who contacted their State Representatives to denounce the weak legislation and ask for stronger protection for our waters. We also thank Representative Jim Jeffords, an original co-sponsor of the Water Quality Renewal Act of 1984, for his efforts ensuring passage of this bill.

The bill retains most of the strong provisions of the original Clean Water Act, and adds a requirement that runoff from agricultural lands and urban streets (non-point sources) be treated to remove pollutants. It also requires special measures be taken to deal with "toxic hot spots," waters where there are high concentrations of toxic chemicals.

A significant provision would set up a commission to study groundwater problems throughout the nation. It is the interrelationship between surface water and groundwater that poses the biggest potential threat to the quality and quantity of our drinking water.

A clean water bill has been reported by the Environment and Public Works Committee (which Senator Robert Stafford chairs) but it has not reached the Senate floor yet. The bill reportedly is in some difficulty because of the amount of money it provides for sewage facilities. An industry spokesman said it would attempt to have changes made.

#### VNRC'S 20th ANNIVERSARY PLANNED FOR SEPTEMBER 8

Don't forget to circle September 8th on your calendar. VNRC has planned an exciting array of afternoon field trips that day to be followed by a business meeting and banquet. Former Governor Deane C. Davis will be one of the honored guests. Founders, life members and former chairs of VNRC's board of directors will also be featured.

We have received a very enthusiastic response to the 20th anniversary issue of the Vermont Environmental Report, and we'll be publishing the next issue in August. If you have a business, product or service you'd like to advertise with us, please call Kathy Bond soon at 223-2328.

**Vermont Natural Resources Council**  
**7 Main Street**  
**Montpelier, Vermont 05602**

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**Bulletin**