



State of Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

PUBLIC INTEREST CENTER

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE: October 20, 2009
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Public Meeting Scheduled to Accept Comments on Requested Mercury Variance at Coshocton Wastewater Treatment Plant

Ohio EPA will hold a public information session and hearing on Tuesday, November 10, 2009, to answer questions and accept comments on a request by the city of Coshocton regarding the amount of mercury allowed to be discharged by its wastewater treatment plant (2742 County Road 271, Coshocton).

The public information session and hearing will begin at 6 p.m. in Coshocton City Hall, Council Chambers (760 Chestnut Street, Coshocton). During the information session, Ohio EPA representatives will present information about the request and answer questions. During the hearing, which will immediately follow the information session, the public can submit comments for the record regarding the request.

The city of Coshocton currently has a wastewater discharge permit from Ohio EPA. Starting in November 2010, the city's permit will be subject to an end-of-discharge-pipe water quality standard of 12 parts per trillion (ppt) to limit the concentrations of mercury being discharged into the Muskingum River and protect public health and the environment.

Coshocton's wastewater treatment plant removes approximately 75 percent of mercury through its regular treatment process. However, the plant is unable to meet the 12 ppt discharge limit without installing a significant and costly treatment system. As allowed by its existing permit and Ohio EPA rules, the city is requesting a variance to its current limit. If approved, the variance would temporarily set the plant's monthly average concentration limit for mercury at 79 ppt, which represents the approximate level of mercury currently discharged by the plant.

If Ohio EPA grants the variance, Coshocton will be required to identify sources of the mercury that discharge to its wastewater treatment plant and take steps to minimize the mercury released from these sources.

Ohio EPA encourages citizens to become involved in the decision-making process. In addition to oral comments provided at the November 10 meeting, Ohio EPA will accept and equally consider written comments received through November 17, 2009. Anyone may submit comments or request to be put on the mailing list for information by writing to: Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water, Permits Processing Unit, P.O. Box 1049, Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049. Ohio EPA will consider all comments before deciding to grant or deny the variance.

The application and other related materials are available for review at Ohio EPA's Southeast District Office, 2195 Front Street in Logan, by first calling (740) 385-8501.

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