



Industrial Heartland Designated Industrial Zone Water Quality Management Program Spring 2024 Director Initiated Amendment

Information Sheet

Introduction

Alberta Environment & Protected Areas (EPA), with support from the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER), has developed the Industrial Heartland Designated Industrial Zone (IH-DIZ) [Water Quality Management Program](#) (WQMP) to support environmental outcomes for surface water quality in the IH-DIZ.

EPA and AER have issued Director Initiated Amendments to Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act (EPEA) Approvals in the IH-DIZ that are within the scope of the WQMP. These Amendments initiate monitoring identified in Phase 1 of the WQMP which is required to move into Phases 2 and 3 of the WQMP. The WQMP provides details for each Phase of the program.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is my facility monitoring water quality parameters that my operation's processes do not contribute to?

Water quality parameters included in the IH-DIZ monitoring requirements have been selected to support the [North Saskatchewan Region Surface Water Quality Management Framework for the North Saskatchewan and Battle Rivers](#). EPA recognizes that not all facilities will contribute to each water quality parameter; nevertheless, data verifying any non-contribution is crucial for the development of the Effluent Management Program during Phase 3 of the IH-DIZ WQMP. All data collected will be used during Phases 2 and 3 with potential adjustments to the monitoring requirements based on the analysis and sufficiency of the data. Timelines for implementation are specified in Section 4 of [the WQMP document](#); however, they may be subject to change due to delayed initiation of monitoring.

What do I do when a monitoring parameter is listed twice, in the facility specific monitoring table and the new WQMP table?

EPA has opted to issue Director Initiated Amendments that add approval conditions outlining all IH-DIZ monitoring requirements, instead of revising existing approval conditions to incorporate these requirements. The desired outcomes of this approach are to (1) clearly differentiate between IH-DIZ monitoring requirements and existing approval monitoring requirements and (2) simplify future updates and implementation of the WQMP monitoring requirements.

The intent of the WQMP Director Initiated Amendments is to enhance, not replace, current monitoring conditions. The expectation is that, where appropriate, monitoring data obtained through existing approval requirements can be used to fulfill IH-DIZ Director Initiated Amendment monitoring needs. The additional IH-DIZ monitoring will be done concurrently to fill in any IH-DIZ data gaps. If further clarity is needed regarding monitoring frequency or specific parameters identified in the Amendment(s) please contact ihcr.programs@gov.ab.ca.

For how long am I expected to monitor additional WQMP water quality parameters?

The Amendments include commencement dates of September 3, 2024 for the WQMP water quality parameters, and March 4, 2025 for discharge monitoring.

These Amendments are essential to initiate timely monitoring and data collection, which will minimize disruptions to subsequent phases and timelines for the WQMP. As stated earlier, all data will be used during Phases 2 and 3 of the WQMP and revisions to monitoring requirements may occur upon analysis of data and determination that the data quantity is sufficient. Timelines

for implementation are detailed in Section 4 of [the WQMP document](#); however, they may be adjusted due to delayed initiation of monitoring.

The Amendment refers to Appendix F for discharge monitoring. When will this be available?

The Amendments include a condition for reporting daily loads for several water quality parameters. Load calculation guidance will be published in a new appendix (Appendix F) of the WQMP document. Development of this appendix will be done under guidance of the IH-DIZ Water Task Team. During this process, approval holders will have the opportunity to review the appendix. It is anticipated that Appendix F will be published before monitoring of discharges begins.

Do we need to collect intake data to supplement the WQMP effluent monitoring data to confirm our facility is not contributing the parameter in our effluent release?

At this time, intake data will not be required, however facilities can voluntarily monitor their intake if desired. EPA has ambient river quality data that will be used when assessing facility contributions of parameters of concern.

Is EPA flexible with monitoring frequencies listed in the Amendment?

The monitoring frequencies listed in the Amendment are the minimum frequencies required to support timely data collection that is necessary for Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the WQMP. Monitoring frequencies will not be reduced at this

time. Once monitoring data has been reviewed, and Phase 2 of the WQMP is in progress, revisions to monitoring requirements and/or frequency may occur.

How and when do we submit WQMP monitoring reports?

Annual IH-DIZ WQMP Reports are required to be submitted annually by April 30, as per the IH-DIZ Standard Conditions Directive. It is understood that most current facility-specific monitoring reports have an annual submission date of March 30. If desired, Approval Holders can submit IH-DIZ WQMP Reports by March 30. WQMP annual reports can be submitted to the standard report submission email (epa.industreport@gov.ab.ca). Contents of the report are outlined in the Amendments.

How will I be updated for on-going implementation on the WQMP and other Regional Initiatives?

As implementation of the WQMP proceeds, facilities will be updated through various avenues, including through the IH-DIZ Water Task Team and through the Northeast Capital Industrial Association (NCIA). Also, EPA will host webinars at key milestones for both NCIA and non-NCIA facilities, offering opportunities to provide input. The regulator will communicate and engage with approval holders through these avenues prior to implementation of key initiatives.

Specific questions regarding the WQMP and Director Initiated Amendments can be directed to ihcr.programs@gov.ab.ca.