



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
LANSING



STEVEN E. CHESTER
DIRECTOR

May 18, 2004

Ms. Jo Lynn Traub, Director
Water Division
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region 5
77 West Jackson Boulevard (W-15J)
Chicago, Illinois 60604-3590

Dear Ms. Traub:

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is submitting the enclosed revised Mercury Permitting Strategy (Strategy) for your review and approval. The proposed Strategy is based on the same principles (i.e., utilizing a variance) as our previous Strategy you approved on May 24, 2002. Significant changes from the previous Strategy include lowering the Level Currently Achievable from 30 nanograms per liter (ng/l) to 10 ng/l, and allowing reduced monitoring for facilities with mercury effluent concentrations below 5 ng/l.

The draft Strategy was noticed in the MDEQ Calendar for public comment and comment was solicited from National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permittees with mercury limits and/or monitoring requirements, 11 stakeholder groups, and the other Great Lakes states. In addition, a public meeting to provide an overview of the Strategy and take comment was held on February 18, 2004. A summary of the comments and the MDEQ's responses are included in Attachment 1 of the Strategy for your review.

We plan to implement the Strategy in the review of NPDES permits to be issued for Fiscal Years 2005-2009, beginning October 1, 2004; therefore, we would appreciate approval of the variance aspect of the Strategy by July 1, 2004, to allow adequate time for preparation of the October 1, 2004, permits.

If you or your staff have any questions on our approach, please contact Ms. Brenda Sayles, Chief, South Unit, Surface Water Quality Assessment Section, Water Division (WD), at 517-335-4198, or you may contact me.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Powers, Chief
Water Division
517-335-4176

rap:ca:dp
Enclosure

cc/enc: Mr. Jim Cleland, WD, MDEQ
Ms. Diana Klemans, WD, MDEQ
Ms. Brenda Sayles, WD, MDEQ
Ms. Christine Alexander, WD, MDEQ