

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NOTICE OF FINAL RULEMAKING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on June 24, 2021, the Mississippi Commission on Environmental Quality (Commission) adopted amendments to Title 11 of the Mississippi Administrative Code, Part 6, Chapter 2, entitled "Mississippi Commission on Environmental Quality Regulation for Surface Water Quality Criteria for Intrastate, Interstate, and Coastal Waters." This action is reflected in Commission Order No. 7137-21

I. Substance of the Amendment.

In accordance with Section 303(c)(1) of the Federal Clean Water Act, States are required to review their surface water quality standards at least once every three years to ensure consistency with federal requirements and to address public concerns. These standards apply to all surface waters of the state such as river, lakes, streams, and estuaries. These regulations do not directly apply to or affect the quality of drinking water, or the standards applied to drinking water by the Mississippi State Department of Health.

Amendments to these standards include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) the addition of three new waterbody classifications, (2) addition of language related to requirements and procedures for water quality standards variances and revisions to waterbody classifications/designated uses, (3) aquatic life criteria updates for protection of aquatic life, (4) site-specific criteria for selenium within Little Bywy Creek, Middle Bywy Creek, and Big Bywy Creek, and (5) the Recreation Classification was added to a segment of Bogue Homa located within the Pearl River Basin.

This notice of final rulemaking is provided pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. §§ 25-43-3.101, et seq., 49-17-25, and 53-9-11.

II. Manner by Which the Public May Comment.

In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 49-17-41, within thirty (30) days of the date of the Order, any interested person may request that a hearing be conducted regarding the issuance of this Order. Such request must be made in writing to Mr. Chris Wells, Executive Director, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 2261, Jackson, Mississippi 39225.

III. Additional Information.

The recently adopted "Regulations for Surface Water Quality Criteria for Intrastate, Interstate, and Coastal Waters" may be viewed on the MDEQ Water Quality Standards Program webpage at <https://www.mdeq.ms.gov/water/surface-water/watershed-management/water-quality-standards/>. Any person wishing to obtain additional information on this matter, a copy of the adopted regulations, or a copy of the Order reflecting the Commission's action may contact Kim Caviness, P.E., BCEE, of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality at 601.961.5390 or by e-mail at kcaviness@mdeq.ms.gov. Please bring the foregoing to the attention of persons whom you know will be interested.