



The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain

House Bill 1621

Wastewater Treatment Plants - Discharges - Monitoring, Reporting, and Requirements

Position: Oppose
Committee: Environment and Transportation
Date: March 13, 2026
From: Alex Butler, Deputy Director of Government Relations

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **OPPOSES** HB 1621.

Bill Summary

House Bill 1621 mandates extensive new monitoring, evaluation, and notification requirements for wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs). The bill would require MDE to monitor WWTP effluent discharges for bacteria, Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and hormones. The bill would also require immediate notification to certain parties for sewer overflows or bypasses and the creation of an online searchable database for pretreatment permits.

Position Rationale

Under the bill MDE would be forced to create an entirely new, dedicated program to monitor effluent from over 532 WWTPs to meet the bill's mandates. Based on the information and assumptions below, MDE anticipates an indeterminate but significant increase in costs to cover the sampling and testing of those samples. MDE also anticipates an indeterminate but significant number of additional positions to conduct the sampling, oversee the sampling program, and manage the sampling data.

Bacteria sampling requirements in WWTP discharge permits vary. There are approximately 11 that require approximately daily sampling and approximately 222 that would require weekly sampling. Currently, not all WWTPs have limits for PFAS and MDE assumes monthly sampling for PFAS for all affected WWTPs. Currently, no WWTPs have limits for hormones and MDE assumes monthly sampling for all affected WWTPs. Testing requirements and costs can vary based on the type of hormone being tested for and the bill does not specify what hormones should be included. The bill does not explicitly require MDE to establish discharge permit limits for hormones but if that requirement is implied, MDE will have additional one-time costs and personnel requirements to establish those limits and ongoing costs related to enforcement.

MDE is actively working with the General Assembly to pass legislation (HB 925/SB 719) that would address PFAS contamination by expanding upon the framework established in the Department's 2024 guidance.

Accordingly, MDE respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** report for HB 1621.

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