

STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
PUBLIC NOTICE OF INFORMATIONAL HEARING AND INTENT TO REISSUE A WISCONSIN
POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (WPDES) PERMIT No. WI-0003620-08-0

Permittee: Domtar A W LLC, 301 Point Basse Ave, Nekoosa, WI 54457-1026

Facilities Where Discharges Occur: Domtar - Nekoosa, 301 Point Basse Ave., Nekoosa, WI and Wastewater Reclamation Center, 405 Church Ave., Nekoosa, WI

Receiving Waters: Wisconsin River, groundwaters in Wood County, and land application sites in Adams, Juneau, Portage, Waushara, and Wood Counties

Discharge Location:

Outfall 002: Submerged and located just north of the Wastewater Reclamation Center at 44° 20' 0" N 89° 53' 0" W

Outfall 005: SW 1/4, SW 1/4, Section 31, T22N, R6E, Town of Grand Rapids, Wood County

Outfall 006: Below the Nekoosa Mill at 44° 18' 45" N 89° 53' 45" W

Outfall 008: Below the Nekoosa Mill

Outfall 010: On DNR approved land application sites in the state of Wisconsin

Outfall 011: East of Nekoosa Dam across the Wisconsin River from the Nekoosa Mill.

Brief Facility Description and Summary of Proposed Changes: Domtar A. W. LLC (Domtar) operates an integrated Kraft pulp and paper mill in Nekoosa which is capable of producing 600 tons per day of air dried kraft pulp and 600 tons per day of finished paper. Paper is made by using kraft pulp produced at the facility from raw logs, purchased wood chips, bleached pulp purchased from other mills, broke and recycled paper. The final products from the facility are rolls of paper. The Nekoosa bleach plant has been elemental chlorine free (ECF) since mid-1998.

The Nekoosa Mill utilizes cooling water and process water from 2 water intakes; Nepco Lake and Wisconsin River. Water that is not used in the papermaking process and utilized for cooling, discharges through Outfall 006 to the Wisconsin River. The mill does have an emergency outfall for the mill's main collection tank to Wisconsin River (Outfall 008). Outfall 011 is an outfall of Nepco Lake water with an intermittent discharge for the purpose of equalizing water pressure levels to the mill; this standpipe outfall discharges to the Wisconsin River. The Nekoosa mill discharges sanitary wastes to the Nekoosa municipal wastewater treatment plant.

The Wastewater Reclamation Center (WRC) treats process wastewaters from the Nekoosa mill, Nekoosa Coated Products, Inc, and site landfill leachates. The WRC is located between Port Edwards and Nekoosa. Process wastewaters including all vacuum pump seal waters from the Nekoosa mill, process wastewaters from Nekoosa Coated Products, ash-bark landfill leachate, and storm water. The solids that settle in the primary and secondary clarifiers get transported to gravity belt thickeners, and are then processed by progressive cavity screw presses. The solids then collect on a concrete pad until they are removed via trailer for field spreading via Outfall 010 on department approved sites or landfilled if field spreading demand is low.

Diagrams of the primary and secondary wastewater treatment processes are shown in the "Wastewater Treatment Flow Schematics" attachment of the fact sheet.

Domtar treats water withdrawn from Nepco Lake for use by the Nekoosa mill. Intake water treatment consists of alum or alum plus polymer addition followed by solids settling in a baffled basin and screening before entering the mill. The settling basins are dredged every three to five years and dredged solids are placed into a dewatering basin. Decant from the dewatering basin flows back to the settling basins. Domtar hauls solids from the dewatering basin to one of its licensed landfill near the WRC. Neither the dewatering basin nor the settling basins are lined. However, sand is placed on the bottom of the dewatering basin. Consequently, current and proposed permits classify seepage from the basins as a groundwater discharge via Outfall 005.

Diagrams showing the process water flow at the Nekoosa mill are shown in the "Water Flow Diagram(s)" attachment of the fact sheet.

Major changes from the previous permit include: removal of Outfalls 001 and 013; new requirements for water intake structures; reduced monitoring frequencies for chlorinated phenolic compounds and AOX; multi-discharge discharger variance requirements for phosphorus; lower mercury variance limit; and removal of dioxin and furan land application requirements. For more information on permit changes see the permit fact sheet.

Permit Drafter: Trevor Moen, DNR, 101 S. Webster St., PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921, (608) 266-3906, Trevor.Moen@wisconsin.gov

Basin Engineer: Peter Pfefferkorn, DNR, 473 Griffith Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494, (715) 421-7868, peter.pfefferkorn@wisconsin.gov

The Department has tentatively decided that the above specified WPDES permit should be reissued.

Proposed Mercury Variance: The Department has determined that a water quality-based effluent limitation (WQBEL) of **1.3 ng/L** for mercury is needed to protect wildlife and human health in the above-named receiving water. The permittee has submitted an application for an alternative mercury effluent limitation (AMEL). The application included a pollutant minimization program (PMP) plan for mercury as required under s. NR 106.145(8), Wis. Adm. Code. The Department concludes that the permittee is eligible for a variance based on the information submitted, information on file and the findings provided in s. NR 106.145(1), Wis. Adm. Code. The Department and the permittee have mutually agreed upon an AMEL of **15 ng/L**, expressed as a daily maximum, continued influent and effluent monitoring, and permit language requiring implementation of the PMP. The Department proposes to grant the AMEL, which represents a variance to the water quality standard used to derive the WQBEL, as provided for under s. NR 106.145(6), Wis. Adm. Code. The designated use of the receiving water will not change as a result of the variance. This mercury variance must be approved by USEPA prior to its inclusion in the final reissued permit.

Hearing Date, Time, and Location: **Tuesday, July 3, 2018 @ 10:00 am in the Hovde A Room, DNR Wisconsin Rapids, 473 Griffith Ave., Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494**

Hearing Officer: **TBD; can call Trevor Moen @ 608-266-3906**

The Department of Natural Resources, pursuant to Section 283.49, Wisconsin Statutes, has scheduled for the time and place listed above, a public hearing for the purpose of giving all interested persons an opportunity to make a statement with respect to the above announced permit action for this existing discharge.

A hearing officer will conduct the hearing in an orderly and speedy way and will use procedures specified in Subchapter II of ch. NR 203, Wis. Adm. Code, necessary to insure broad public participation in the hearing. The hearing officer will open the hearing and make a concise statement of the scope and purpose of the hearing and shall state what procedures will be used during the course of the hearing. The hearing officer shall explain the method of notification of the final decision to grant or deny the permit and the methods by which the decision may be reviewed in a public adjudicatory hearing.

The hearing officer may put limits on individual oral statements to insure an opportunity for all persons present to make statements in a reasonable period of time and to prevent undue repetition. The hearing officer may also limit the number of representatives making oral statements on behalf of any person or group. Informational and clarifying questions and oral statements shall be directed through the hearing officer. Cross-examination shall not be allowed.

Phosphorus Multi-Discharger Variance: The Department has determined that the permittee is eligible for a phosphorus multi-discharger variance (MDV) in accordance with s. 283.16, Wis. Stats. The MDV provides a time extension for the permittee to comply with the final water quality based effluent limits for phosphorus while contributing funds towards nonpoint pollution control projects to reduce phosphorus. Comments on this determination are requested and additional supporting documentation and data are available upon request.

Persons wishing to comment on or object to the proposed permit action are invited to do so by attending the public hearing or by submitting any comments or objections in writing to the Department of Natural Resources, at the permit drafter's address. All comments or suggestions received from members of the public no later than 7 days following the date of this public hearing will be used, along with other information on file and testimony presented at the hearing, in making a final determination. Where designated as a reviewable surface water discharge permit, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is allowed up to 90 days to submit comments or objections regarding this permit determination.

Information on file for this permit action, including the draft permit, fact sheet and permit application, may be inspected and copied at the permit drafter's or basin engineer's office, Monday through Friday (except holidays), between 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Please call the permit drafter or basin engineer for directions to their office location, if necessary. Information on this permit action may also be obtained by calling the permit drafter at (608) 266-3906 or by writing to the Department. Reasonable costs (15 cents per page for copies and 7 cents per page for scanning) will be charged for information in the file other than the public notice, permit and fact sheet. Permit information is also available on the internet at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wastewater/PublicNotices.html>. Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodation, including the provision of informational material in an alternative format, will be made to qualified individuals upon request.

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