

Guidance for Conducting and Documenting Visual Observations of Discharges

A visual examination of a discharge must be conducted at least once during each day a discharge occurs. However, conducting examinations more frequently is encouraged in order to detect and correct any problems as soon as possible. If discharge is to occur during nighttime hours, an examination should take place during the late afternoon or evening while there is sufficient light available and again early in the morning.

Each visual examination must document observations of color, odor, clarity, floating solids, settled materials, foam, sheens, erosion, and any other obvious indications of water pollution.

It is recommended that the same person or persons perform and document the visual examinations each day that discharge occurs so that they are done in a consistent manner. The examination should be conducted at the end of the hose, pipe, or other conduit that carries water. For surface water discharges, this point should also be prior to the point where the water enters any river, stream, drainage ditch, storm sewer, or tile line.

The results must be documented in writing with the date and time of the examination. The documentation should also include the name of the person performing the examination. The documentation must be retained for at least three years after discharge at a site has ceased. Documentation is not required to be submitted to the Department but must be made available upon request.

If the discharge does not comply with the applicable permit requirements, the discharge must be stopped until corrective action is taken.

If the discharge constitutes a hazardous condition, the Department must be notified as soon as possible, but not later than six (6) hours after the onset or discovery of the hazardous condition in accordance with Rule 567 IAC 131.2. The Department's 24-hour line for spill reporting is (515)725-8694.