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ADEQ issues new streamlined environmental permit for minimal discharges to water

PHOENIX (April 27, 2010) – The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality has approved a general permit for the next five years for the release of small amounts of relatively pollutant-free water, known as De Minimis discharges, to surface water under the Arizona Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (AZPDES) program.

The De Minimis discharges covered under the permit must meet applicable surface water quality standards, are generally infrequent and must be managed to protect water quality and the environment. Examples include discharges from maintenance of potable water systems, well development and testing, street washing, and the drainage of dechlorinated water from swimming pools.

Under state and federal law, most discharges to waters of the U.S. on non-tribal lands in Arizona must have coverage under an AZPDES permit. The De Minimis general permit benefits eligible applicants by significantly shortening the time necessary to obtain permit coverage. The permitting process also increases efficiency and consistency for ADEQ's regulatory role. The general permit contains many improvements based on stakeholder comment and two public meetings last year coupled with ADEQ's experience with its earlier 2004 permit.

“Our low-cost general permit will reduce paperwork and maintain environmental protection, reflecting the type of measure Gov. (Jan) Brewer wants us to take to get jobs flowing while conserving our natural resources. It's a practical and responsible way to support projects that benefit the community and economy with very little, if any, environmental impact,” said ADEQ Director Benjamin H. Grumbles.

Further information on the 2010 De Minimis general permit is available on the ADEQ web page at <http://www.azdeq.gov/environ/water/permits/gen.html#demi> along with links to the permit and related documents. Printed copies of the permit may be requested from the ADEQ Records Center at (602) 771-4380.

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