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ADEQ Officials Announce New Air Quality General Permits Available for Wastewater Treatment Plants in 12 Counties

PHOENIX (Aug. 4, 2011) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality officials announced today that a new, streamlined air quality control permit is now available for operation of wastewater treatment plants in most parts of the state.

The general permit, which is valid for five years, can be obtained in only a small fraction of the time required to receive an individual permit and the cost will be significantly less than what individual permits cost. Coverage under the general permit will be available in Arizona's 12 counties outside of Maricopa, Pinal and Pima. Wastewater treatment plant operators in the state's three most urban counties can contact the appropriate county agency to determine if an air quality permit is necessary.

“We are continuously looking for ways to reduce unnecessary and time-consuming red tape, while maintaining the same or higher level of environmental protection,” said ADEQ Director Henry Darwin. “It generally takes a wastewater treatment plant from six to nine months to receive an individual permit. This new general permit will only take a few days and will offer better air quality protection due to the conservative assumptions made in developing this permit.”

Darwin also said that the cost of processing an application for a general permit will be \$500 in contrast with the thousands of dollars for a site-specific permit. Annual administrative costs for the general permits will be about \$5,000 a year as opposed to the about \$8,500 a year for individual permits. The permits will cover wastewater treatment activities including odor controls, fuel burning boilers and fuel burning generators.

Wastewater treatment plants already operating under other air quality general permits for generators and boilers are also eligible for the new general permit, which will cover all emissions from equipment like boilers and generators. The fees will be the same as for the general permits currently held.

The application for the new general permit is available online at <http://www.azdeq.gov/environ/air/permits/download/gnwwtpapp.pdf>