

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **King County Industrial Waste Program's Wastewater Discharge Permit application**

In an ongoing effort to improve the process for industrial users of the King County sewer system when they apply for industrial wastewater discharge approvals, KCIW is addressing frequently asked questions about terms used or routine requirements cited in the permit application.

#### **1. When are engineering reports necessary or required?**

Generally, submittal of an engineering report and approval by KCIW is required prior to the installation of all new pretreatment systems. An engineering report is also required when the facility applying for a wastewater discharge approval is proposing to make significant changes to the existing pretreatment system, including a change in flow rate, concentration, chemical composition or any other factor that could affect the effluent quality. If a facility is uncertain, it should always consult with KCIW to determine whether it is required to submit an engineering report.

*Applicants are encouraged to contact KCIW with all questions early in the process of applying.*

#### **2. Why does King County need to know the raw materials and chemicals used in the industrial process?**

Because these materials have the potential to reach the sewer and the treatment plant, KCIW needs to know the quantities; the purpose; the tank volumes and the working concentrations of materials and chemicals on-site in order to determine the amount of risk that the facility poses to the sewer system and the treatment plant.

#### **3. In the general instructions of the wastewater discharge permit application, KCIW requires that the facility submit three copies of the application. Why are three copies of the application needed?**

KCIW keeps two of the copies of the completed application in two types of filing systems and forwards a third copy to the applicable local sewer agency for its review and comment.

Receiving the three full copies of all materials with an application can save KCIW time, as, for instance, applications' site plans, maps, and manuals are not easily photocopied.

**4. KCIW’s wastewater discharge permit application states “submit one permit application for each site.” What is the difference between a “site” and a “facility”?**

**Site” vs. “facility”:** “Site” and “facility,” used this way, have the same meaning. As used in the application, a site or facility generally is contained within one building or adjoining buildings that have the same address. However determining whether or not multiple building locations should hold a common permit can be confusing, particularly when a company or facility has a large campus with industrial processes in more than one building. A facility for which that is applicable should consult KCIW prior to completing the application.

**“Sample site”:** Once a facility is issued a permit, the location where compliance monitoring samples are collected is referred to as its “sample site.”

**“Site”:** Even though applicant facilities may have multiple sample sites at their facilities, applicants should understand that KCIW uses the term “site” in the permit application to refer to the building or buildings where a facility manufactures its product(s).

**5. What is meant by “Nature of Business” found in Section B of the application form?**

KCIW uses the information from section B along with other sections of the application to determine applicable discharge limits for the facility. In this section, KCIW would like the applicant to state the main activities or processes at the facility or site that produce wastewater. These might include metal finishing, food processing, groundwater remediation, battery manufacturing or construction dewatering.

**6. What is “process wastewater”?**

King County defines process wastewater as any water which, during manufacturing or processing, comes into direct contact with, or results from production or use of any raw material, intermediate product, finished product, byproduct, or waste product. This includes rinse waters, water used to clean materials or work areas, water used to test products and cooling water that comes into contact with a facility’s product(s).

Depending on a facility’s industrial activity, different types of water used at the facility may be regulated differently. In general, facilities need to account for all water used at their sites; whether or not it is used somewhere in the manufacturing process (process water); in employee kitchens or restrooms (sanitary wastewater) or in heating/cooling systems (non-contact cooling water).

*Applicants are encouraged to contact KCIW (see left column of this page) with all questions during the process of applying.*