

NPDES LICENCES

The main mechanism for administering the Act is a licensing program -- the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. Companies must have an industrial wastewater licence specifying quality, quantity and restrictions on discharges. Discussions between a company and the environmental authorities are held before the licence is issued. The licence is usually renewable every five years.

STANDARDS FOR INDUSTRIAL EFFLUENTS

The EPA has developed national effluent guidelines for 51 industrial categories. Maximum concentrations for a given pollutant may vary with the category of industry. The standards are based on the degree of reduction attainable through the application of two levels of technology:

- the best practicable technology (BPT) in the case of existing facilities;
- the best available technology (BAT) for new facilities.

In September 1992, the EPA announced its plan for establishing new guidelines: 21 sets of regulations by the year 2003, including regulations for 9 industrial segments by the end of 1996 (see Table 1.3).