

Current Water Quality Challenges and Opportunities in Rhode Island



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Challenges/Opportunities

- AI Criteria
- Impairments (Enterococci, TN, Hg)
- Emerging Pollutants
- MS4 Permit Compliance



Al Criteria

- 6 RI WWTFs w/TP Treatment
 - 3 Use Aluminum Chemistry to Meet TP Limits
 - 2 can't meet limits
- New EPA criteria published December 2018
 - Increase chronic criteria from 87 ug/l to ~ 550 ug/l (at typical DOC, Hardness, and pH)
- Needs:
 - Modify WQ Regs to include new criteria
 - Collect in-stream data to calculate criteria/limits



Impairments

- Pathogens
 - As more data is collected more impairments are found
- TN in Upper Narragansett Bay
 - Reductions at key WWTFs (7 RI and 3 MA) have meet 50% reduction goals
 - Continue to work on cesspool phaseout, TN reducing OWTS, and stormwater retrofits
- Hg in Fish Tissue
 - As more data is collected more impairments are found
 - Concern from the Narragansett Tribe
- Needs:
 - Continue to collect more data to quantify impairments
 - Address sources of impairments



Emerging Pollutants

- **PFAS/PFOA**
 - Sampling of public drinking water supplies began in 2017
 - October 2017 RIDEM 70 ppt groundwater standard for GAA or GA groundwater
 - March 2018 RIDEM notified state airports
- **Needs:**
 - Continued sampling to quantify concentrations
 - More research needed to develop WQ criteria
 - Determine need for RIPDES limits



MS4 Permit Compliance

- Permit Issued in 2003
- Enforcement taken against 7 permittees
 - EPA against RIDOT
 - DEM against 6 Towns/Cities
- Permittees continue to submit TMDL Implementations Plans/Stormwater Control Plans for review/approval
- Needs:
 - Reissue permit
 - Track compliance with consent agreements
 - Review TMDL IPs/SCPs





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