



Sustainable Water Group

Water Quality Guidelines

Revised June 2010

Introduction

The Water Quality Guidelines, supported by the Sustainable Water Group (SWG), are used as goals to improve and/or maintain wastewater quality in Member's own operations and in the mills and laundries with which they do business.

Textile mills and laundries are asked to meet or exceed the parameter guidelines for wastewater included here and/or all applicable local/national laws, whichever is more stringent. In addition to parameter values for wastewater, the guidelines include Zero Tolerance activities, guidance for Publicly Owned Treatment Works, and other requirements.

The Water Quality Guidelines (WQG) Parameters

The Guidelines provide a Limit Value for each parameter. Below these values and/or the local legal values (whichever is more stringent), a facility can be considered 'In Compliance' with the guidelines.

Some brands may also elect to allow samples thresholds higher than the Limit Values to allow a margin for slight deviations from the Limit Values or continuous improvement. Sustainable Water Group Members can adjust the Threshold Values to their desired levels, but are advised to leave the Lower Limit Values unchanged, to promote consistency across the industry.

SAMPLING AND TRADITIONAL PARAMETERS

Parameter	Limit Value
Sampling:	
Temperature	≤37°C
pH, Standard Units	6.0-9.0
Traditional Parameters:	
Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	≤ 30 ppm
Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD)	≤ 30 ppm
Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)	≤ 200 ppm

CHEMICAL CONSTITUENTS

Parameter	Lower Limit Value
Antimony	≤ 0.50 ppm
Arsenic	≤ 0.01 ppm
Cadmium	≤ 0.01 ppm
Chromium	≤ 0.10 ppm
Cobalt	≤ 0.02 ppm
Copper	≤ 0.25 ppm
Cyanide	≤ 0.20 ppm
Lead	≤ 0.10 ppm
Mercury	≤ 0.01 ppm
Nickel	≤ 0.20 ppm
Zinc	≤ 1.00 ppm
Color	≤150 ADMI units or 150 CO-PT units
Coliform	400 bacteria per 100ML
Foam: No visible discharge of floating solids or persistent foam.	
Domestic Sewage: Sewage must not be discharged directly into open bodies of water. If there is no public treatment facility available, a treatment system should be installed.	

Zero Tolerance Activities

Any facility that discharges illegally or bypasses treatment systems should be considered 'Not in Compliance,' and the appropriate steps to address the issue should be taken immediately.

Publicly Owned Treatment Works

If wastewater is discharged to a public/municipal treatment works plant, the treatment works must treat water to the levels specified in the performance guidelines. Otherwise, the discharger is responsible for treating wastewater per the performance guidelines. Facilities should also present a contingency plan for how water will be treated should the public treatment works fail.

Other Requirements

LAB EQUIPMENT

Facilities should have the following lab equipment readily available on site.

- » pH meter
- » Imhoff Cone
- » Thermometer

FLOW METERS

Flow meters should be installed, at a minimum at input and output points to measure water volumes on a regular basis.

STAFF

A certified engineer should be on site to manage wastewater treatment activities.