

SOP for Acceptance of New Method Implementation at Wastewater Treatment Facility Laboratories

Procedure Objective:

This procedure is to support Wastewater Analysts who need to guide operators at Wastewater Treatment Facilities (WWTFs) through the implementation of new analysis methods for regulated parameters. The new method must be approved in 40 CFR Part 136 to be acceptable for compliance purposes. Using split samples with a contract laboratory is not recommended since the methods used may differ and the uncertainty of the test methods may be too high to make determining significant difference between the approaches difficult.

Impacted Departments or Divisions:

WSMD – Wastewater Management Program

Required Resources:

40 CFR Part 136, most recent update (<https://www.epa.gov/cwa-methods>)

List of proficiency test providers

Individual method guidance documents

Governing Documents:

40 CFR Part 136

General VT NPDES permit condition stating “Proper operation and maintenance also includes adequate laboratory controls and appropriate quality assurance procedures”

Timeline/Frequency:

When facilities wish to implement a new test method and as needed to assure the quality of self-reported DMR data

Procedure:

1. The facility must continue to implement the current method until the Wastewater Management Program approves the use of the new method for compliance purposes.
2. Determine the method proposed by the facility is approved in 40 CFR Part 136.
3. Recommend the facility reach out to the vendor of the reagents for training in the method.
4. The facility must pass proficiency tests (PT) from two consecutive Water Pollution (WP) studies. Proficiency tests from two different, independent PT providers may be used if preferred.
5. The facility must submit the graded results of the PT studies to the wastewater analyst responsible for the facility.
6. Once both test results are received and an approval email sent to the facility, the new method may be used for compliance reporting.
7. The wastewater analyst must save the approval email and PT test results in the correspondence folder.