

# TITLE L

## WATER MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

### CHAPTER 485-A

#### WATER POLLUTION AND WASTE DISPOSAL

#### Classification of Waters

##### Section 485-A:8

**485-A:8 Standards for Classification of Surface Waters of the State.** – It shall be the overall goal that all surface waters attain and maintain specified standards of water quality to achieve the purposes of the legislative classification. For purposes of classification there shall be 2 classes or grades of surface waters as follows:

I. Class A waters shall be of the highest quality and shall contain not more than either a geometric mean based on at least 3 samples obtained over a 60-day period of 47 *Escherichia coli* per 100 milliliters, or greater than 153 *Escherichia coli* per 100 milliliters in any one sample; and for designated beach areas shall contain not more than a geometric mean based on at least 3 samples obtained over a 60-day period of 47 *Escherichia coli* per 100 milliliters, or 88 *Escherichia coli* per 100 milliliters in any one sample; unless naturally occurring. There shall be no discharge of any sewage or wastes into waters of this classification. The waters of this classification shall be considered as being potentially acceptable for water supply uses after adequate treatment.

II. Class B waters shall be of the second highest quality and shall have no objectionable physical characteristics, shall contain a dissolved oxygen content of at least 75 percent of saturation, and shall contain not more than either a geometric mean based on at least 3 samples obtained over a 60-day period of 126 *Escherichia coli* per 100 milliliters, or greater than 406 *Escherichia coli* per 100 milliliters in any one sample; and for designated beach areas shall contain not more than a geometric mean based on at least 3 samples obtained over a 60-day period of 47 *Escherichia coli* per 100 milliliters, or 88 *Escherichia coli* per 100 milliliters in any one sample; unless naturally occurring. There shall be no disposal of sewage or waste into said waters except those which have received adequate treatment to prevent the lowering of the biological, physical, chemical or bacteriological characteristics below those given above, nor shall such disposal of sewage or waste be inimical to aquatic life or to the maintenance of aquatic life in said receiving waters. The pH range for said waters shall be 6.5 to 8.0 except when due to natural causes. Any stream temperature increase associated with the discharge of treated sewage, waste or cooling water, water diversions, or releases shall not be such as to appreciably interfere with the uses assigned to this class. The waters of this classification shall be considered as being acceptable for fishing, swimming and other recreational purposes

and, after adequate treatment, for use as water supplies. Where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the department that the class B criteria cannot reasonably be met in certain surface waters at all times as a result of combined sewer overflow events, temporary partial use areas shall be established by rules adopted under RSA 485-A:6, XI-c, which meet, as a minimum, the standards specified in paragraph III.

III. The waters in temporary partial use areas established under paragraph II shall be free from slick, odors, turbidity, sludge deposits, and surface-floating solids of unreasonable kind or quantity, shall contain not less than 5 parts per million of dissolved oxygen; shall have a hydrogen ion concentration within the range of pH 6.0 to 9.0 except when due to natural causes; and shall be free from chemicals and other materials and conditions inimical to aquatic life or the maintenance of aquatic life. These criteria shall apply during combined sewer overflow discharges and up to 3 days following cessation of said discharge. At all other times the standards and uses specified in paragraph II shall apply.

IV. Notwithstanding anything contained in this chapter, the department in submitting classifications relating to interstate waters to the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission for review and approval, as provided for under the terms of Article V of the compact whereby the interstate commission was created by RSA 484, shall submit such classifications in accordance with the standards of water quality as currently adopted by said interstate water pollution control commission provided, however, that the standards for any classification thus submitted for review and approval shall not be less than, nor exceed the standards of the classification duly adopted by the General Court as provided for in RSA 485-A:9 or 10.

V. Tidal waters utilized for swimming purposes shall contain not more than either a geometric mean based on at least 3 samples obtained over a 60-day period of 35 enterococci per 100 milliliters, or 104 enterococci per 100 milliliters in any one sample, unless naturally occurring. Those tidal waters used for growing or taking of shellfish for human consumption shall, in addition to the foregoing requirements, be in accordance with the criteria recommended under the National Shellfish Program Manual of Operation, United States Department of Food and Drug Administration.

VI. Notwithstanding anything contained in this chapter, the commissioner shall have the authority to adopt such stream classification criteria as may be issued from time to time by the federal Environmental Protection Agency or its successor agency insofar as said criteria may relate to the water uses specified in RSA 485-A:8, I and II, provided, however, that the criteria thus issued shall not result in standards that are less than nor exceed the standards of the classification duly enacted by the general court as provided for in RSA 485-A:9 or 485-A:10.

VII. All tests and sampling for the purposes of examination of waters shall be performed and carried out in a reasonable manner and whenever practicable, in accordance with the commonly accepted scientific method as selected by the department. The waters in each classification shall satisfy all the provisions of all lower classifications. The minimum treatment for the lowest classification shall be as follows:

(a) For sewage, secondary treatment and disinfection as necessary to comply with water quality standards.

(b) For industrial wastes and combined sewer overflows, such treatment as the

department shall determine. Appeal from any such determination shall be in the manner provided for in RSA 21-O:14.

VIII. In prescribing minimum treatment provisions for thermal wastes discharged to interstate waters, the department shall adhere to the water quality requirements and recommendations of the New Hampshire fish and game department, the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission, or the United States Environmental Protection Agency, whichever requirements and recommendations provide the most effective level of thermal pollution control.

IX. Subject to the provisions of RSA 485-A:13, I(a), the fish and game department may use rotenone or similar compounds in the conduct of its program to reclaim the public waters of the state for game fishing.

**Source.** 1989, 339:1. 1991, 371:3-5. 1996, 228:77, 106, 110. 1998, 63:1, eff. July 11, 1998.