



PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



PAUL MERCER
COMMISSIONER

August 1, 2017

Mr. Scot Linkletter
Plant Manager
Maine Wood Pellets Company
164 Harmony Road
PO Box 120
Athens, ME 04912
e-mail: scot@mainewoodpelletco.com

RE: Maine Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MEPDES) Permit #ME0037401
Maine Waste Discharge License (WDL) Application #W009127-5R-D-M
Modification

Dear Mr. Linkletter:

Enclosed please find a copy of your **final** MEPDES permit and Maine WDL **modification** which was approved by the Department of Environmental Protection. Please read this permit modification and its attached conditions carefully. Compliance with this modification will protect water quality.

Any interested person aggrieved by a Department determination made pursuant to applicable regulations, may appeal the decision following the procedures described in the attached DEP FACT SHEET entitled "*Appealing a Commissioner's Licensing Decision.*"

If you have any questions regarding the matter, please feel free to call me at 287-7693. Your Department compliance inspector copied below is also a resource that can assist you with compliance. Please do not hesitate to contact them with any questions.

Thank you for your efforts to protect and improve the waters of the great state of Maine!

Sincerely,

Gregg Wood
Division of Water Quality Management
Bureau of Water Quality

Enc.

cc: Clarissa Trasko, DEP/EMRO Lori Mitchell, DEP/CMRO
Sandy Mojica, USEPA Marely Vega, USEPA Olga Vergara, USEPA

AUGUSTA
17 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0017
(207) 287-7688 FAX: (207) 287-7826

BANGOR
106 HOGAN ROAD, SUITE 6
BANGOR, MAINE 04401
(207) 941-4570 FAX: (207) 941-4584

PORTLAND
312 CANCO ROAD
PORTLAND, MAINE 04103
(207) 822-6300 FAX: (207) 822-6303

PRESQUE ISLE
1235 CENTRAL DRIVE, SKYWAY PARK
PRESQUE ISLE, MAINE 04769
(207) 764-0477 FAX: (207) 760-3143



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
17 STATE HOUSE STATION AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0017

DEPARTMENT ORDER

IN THE MATTER OF

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| MAINE WOOD PELLET COMPANY, LLC, |) | MAINE POLLUTANT DISCHARGE |
| *ATHENS CAPITAL HOLDINGS, LLC, AND |) | |
| *ATHENS ENERGY, LLC |) | ELIMINATION SYSTEM |
| ATHENS, SOMERSET COUNTY, MAINE |) | AND |
| ME0037401 |) | WASTE DISCHARGE LICENSE |
| W009127-5R-D-M |) | MODIFICATION |
| (APPROVAL) |) | |

In compliance with the applicable provisions of *Pollution Control*, 38 M.R.S. §§ 411 – 424-B, *Water Classification Program*, 38 M.R.S. §§ 464 – 470 and *Federal Water Pollution Control Act*, Title 33 U.S.C. § 1251, and applicable rules of the Department of Environmental Protection (Department hereinafter), the Department has considered an application by MAINE WOOD PELLET COMPANY, LLC, *ATHENS CAPITAL HOLDINGS, LLC and *ATHENS ENERGY, LLC (permittee hereinafter), to modify combination Maine Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MEPDES) permit #ME0037401/Maine Waste Discharge License (WDL) #W009127-5R-A-N (permit hereinafter), last issued to the permittee on June 8, 2015, for a five-year term. With its supportive data, agency review comments, and other related materials on file the Department FINDS THE FOLLOWING FACTS:

MINOR REVISION SUMMARY

On June 8, 2015, the Department issued a new MEPDES/WDL to the permittee for a daily maximum discharge flow of 24,500 gallons per day (gpd) of non-contact cooling tower blowdown water from a wood pellet manufacturing complex to the East Branch Wesserunsett Stream, Class B, in Athens, Maine.

The power generation commenced in late 2016. The operators have subsequently encountered problems with scale and corrosion on the cooling equipment. The solution to the scale and corrosion involves adjusting the water chemistry additives and to increase the rate at which blowdown is discharged. As a result, the permittee is requesting the Department increase the daily maximum discharge flow limitation from 24,500 gpd to 67,680 gpd. It is noted the discharge rate is contingent upon the stream flow at the time of discharge. See Special Condition F, *Temperature Difference*, of the June 8, 2015, permit.

MODIFICATIONS GRANTED/DENIED

The request by the permittee to increase the daily maximum flow limitation from 24,500 gpd to 67,680 gpd is acceptable to the Department. Therefore the permit is being modified accordingly.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings summarized on page 1 of this modification, and subject to the special and standard conditions that follow, the Department makes the following CONCLUSIONS:

1. The discharge, either by itself or in combination with other discharges, will not lower the quality of any classified body of water below such classification.
2. The discharge, either by itself or in combination with other discharges, will not lower the quality of any unclassified body of water below the classification which the Department expects to adopt in accordance with state law.
3. The provisions of the State's antidegradation policy, *Classification of Maine waters*, 38 M.R.S. § 464(4)(F), will be met, in that:
 - (a) Existing in-stream water uses and the level of water quality necessary to protect and maintain those existing uses will be maintained and protected;
 - (b) Where high quality waters of the State constitute an outstanding natural resource, that water quality will be maintained and protected;
 - (c) Where the standards of classification of the receiving water body are not met, the discharge will not cause or contribute to the failure of the water body to meet the standards of classification;
 - (d) Where the actual quality of any classified receiving water body exceeds the minimum standards of the next highest classification that higher water quality will be maintained and protected; and
 - (e) Where a discharge will result in lowering the existing water quality of any water body, the Department has made the finding, following opportunity for public participation, that this action is necessary to achieve important economic or social benefits to the State.
4. The discharges will be subject to effluent limitations that require application of best practicable treatment as defined in *Conditions of Licenses*, 38 M.R.S. § 414-A(1)(D).

ACTION


Based on the findings and conclusions as stated above, the Department APPROVES the modification of combination MEPDES permit #ME0037401/WDL #W009127-5R-A-N, last issued to MAINE WOOD PELLET COMPANY, LLC, *ATHENS CAPITAL HOLDINGS, LLC and *ATHENS ENERGY, LLC (permittee hereinafter), on June 8, 2015, for a five-year term, SUBJECT TO THE ATTACHED CONDITIONS, and all applicable standards and regulations including:

1. *Maine Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Standard Conditions Applicable To All Permits*, revised July 1, 2002, copy attached to MEPDES permit #ME0037401/WDL #W009127-5R-A-N, issued on June 8, 2015, for a five-year term.
2. The attached Special Conditions, including any effluent limitations and monitoring requirements.
3. All terms and conditions of MEPDES permit #ME0037401/WDL #W009127-5R-A-N, issued on June 8, 2015, for a five-year term not modified by this minor remain in effect and enforceable.
4. This minor revision and the authorization to discharge become effective upon the date of signature below and expire at midnight on June 8, 2020. If a renewal application is timely submitted and accepted as complete for processing prior to the expiration of this permit, the authorization to discharge and the terms and conditions of this permit and all modifications and minor revisions thereto remain in effect until a final Department decision on the renewal application becomes effective. [*Maine Administrative Procedure Act*, 5 M.R.S. § 10002 and *Rules Concerning the Processing of Applications and Other Administrative Matters*, 06-096 CMR 2(21)(A) (amended October 19, 2015)].

PLEASE NOTE ATTACHED SHEET FOR GUIDANCE ON APPEAL PROCEDURES

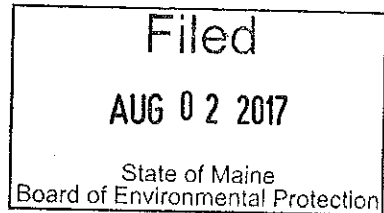
DONE AND DATED AT AUGUSTA, MAINE, THIS 2ND DAY OF August 2017.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

BY: 
PAUL MERCER, Commissioner

Date of initial receipt of application: June 21, 2017

Date of application acceptance: June 21, 2017



Date filed with Board of Environmental Protection _____

This Order prepared by Gregg Wood, BUREAU OF WATER QUALITY

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

A. EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

YEAR ROUND

The permittee is authorized to discharge cooling tower blowdown water to East Branch Wesserunsett Stream at Athens, Maine via **Outfall #001A** year round. Such discharges are limited and must be monitored by the permittee as specified below:

| Effluent Characteristic | Discharge Limitations | | | Monitoring Requirements | |
|--|-----------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | Monthly Average | Weekly Average | Daily Maximum | Measurement Frequency | Sample Type |
| Flow [50050] | --- | --- | 67,680 gpd [03] | 1/Discharge Day [01/DD] | Estimate ⁽¹⁾ [ES] |
| Temperature ⁽²⁾ [00011] | --- | --- | 85°F [15] | 1/Discharge Day [01/DD] | Grab [GR] |
| pH [00400] | --- | --- | 6.0 – 9.0 SU [12] | 1/Discharge Day [01/DD] | Grab [GR] |
| Total Residual Chlorine [50060] | --- | --- | 0.35 mg/L [19] | 1/Discharge Day [01/DD] | Grab [GR] |

The italicized numeric values bracketed in the table and in subsequent text are code numbers that Department personnel utilize to code the monthly Discharge Monitoring Reports.

FOOTNOTES: See Page 6 of this minor revision for applicable footnotes.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

A. EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS (cont'd)

| Effluent Characteristic | Discharge Limitations | | | Monitoring Requirements | |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | Monthly Average | Weekly Average | Daily Maximum | Measurement Frequency | Sample Type |
| Temperature Difference <i>[00018]</i> | --- | 0.5°F ⁽³⁾ <i>[15]</i> | --- | 1/Discharge Day <i>[01/DD]</i> | Calculate <i>[CA]</i> |
| Temperature Difference <i>[00018]</i> | --- | --- | 0.5°F ⁽⁴⁾ <i>[15]</i> | 1/Discharge Day <i>[01/DD]</i> | Calculate <i>[CA]</i> |
| Stream Flow (Daily Minimum) <i>[00061]</i> | --- | --- | Report (cfs) <i>[08]</i> | 1/Discharge Day <i>[01/DD]</i> | Measure ⁽⁵⁾ <i>[MS]</i> |
| Temperature ⁽²⁾ (Stream) <i>[00011]</i> | --- | --- | Report°F <i>[15]</i> | 1/Discharge Day <i>[01/DD]</i> | Grab <i>[GR]</i> |

The italicized numeric values bracketed in the table and in subsequent text are code numbers that Department personnel utilize to code the monthly Discharge Monitoring Reports.

FOOTNOTES: See Page 6 of this minor revision for applicable footnotes.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

A. EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS (cont'd)

FOOTNOTES:

1. **Flow** – Estimation of flows must be determined by a method approved by the Department.
2. **Temperature** – Sampling and analysis must be conducted in accordance with; a) methods approved in Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR) Part 136; b) alternative methods approved by the Department in accordance with the procedures in 40 CFR Part 136; or c) as otherwise specified by the Department. Stream temperature is to be measured adjacent to the US Geological Survey's gauge station #01048220 unless another method of obtaining stream flow data is approved by the Department.
3. **Temperature Difference** – This is a seven-day rolling average limitation when the receiving water temperature is greater than or equal to (\geq) 66°F and less than ($<$) 73°F. Please refer to the equation in Special Condition F, *Temperature Difference*, of this permit to determine the temperature change limitations required to comply with the weekly average temperature difference limitation. Values to be used in the equation in Special Condition F must be the most current seven days.
4. **Temperature Difference** – This is a daily maximum limitation when the receiving water temperature is \geq 73°F. Please refer to the equation in Special Condition F, *Temperature Difference*, of this permit to determine the temperature change limitations required to comply with the daily maximum temperature difference limitation.
5. **Stream flow** – Stream flow measurements must be obtained from US Geological Survey's gauge station #01048220, unless another method of obtaining stream flow data is approved by the Department.
6. **Total Residual Chlorine** – Limitations and monitoring requirements are in effect anytime elemental chlorine or chlorine based compounds are utilized to disinfect the discharge(s). The permittee must utilize an EPA-approved test method capable of bracketing the TRC limitations specified in this permitting action.



DEP INFORMATION SHEET

Appealing a Department Licensing Decision

Dated: March 2012

Contact: (207) 287-2811

SUMMARY

There are two methods available to an aggrieved person seeking to appeal a licensing decision made by the Department of Environmental Protection's ("DEP") Commissioner: (1) in an administrative process before the Board of Environmental Protection ("Board"); or (2) in a judicial process before Maine's Superior Court. An aggrieved person seeking review of a licensing decision over which the Board had original jurisdiction may seek judicial review in Maine's Superior Court.

A judicial appeal of final action by the Commissioner or the Board regarding an application for an expedited wind energy development (35-A M.R.S.A. § 3451(4)) or a general permit for an offshore wind energy demonstration project (38 M.R.S.A. § 480-HH(1)) or a general permit for a tidal energy demonstration project (38 M.R.S.A. § 636-A) must be taken to the Supreme Judicial Court sitting as the Law Court.

This INFORMATION SHEET, in conjunction with a review of the statutory and regulatory provisions referred to herein, can help a person to understand his or her rights and obligations in filing an administrative or judicial appeal.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS TO THE BOARD

LEGAL REFERENCES

The laws concerning the DEP's *Organization and Powers*, 38 M.R.S.A. §§ 341-D(4) & 346, the *Maine Administrative Procedure Act*, 5 M.R.S.A. § 11001, and the DEP's *Rules Concerning the Processing of Applications and Other Administrative Matters* ("Chapter 2"), 06-096 CMR 2 (April 1, 2003).

HOW LONG YOU HAVE TO SUBMIT AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD

The Board must receive a written appeal within 30 days of the date on which the Commissioner's decision was filed with the Board. Appeals filed after 30 calendar days of the date on which the Commissioner's decision was filed with the Board will be rejected.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD

Signed original appeal documents must be sent to: Chair, Board of Environmental Protection, c/o Department of Environmental Protection, 17 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0017; faxes are acceptable for purposes of meeting the deadline when followed by the Board's receipt of mailed original documents within five (5) working days. Receipt on a particular day must be by 5:00 PM at DEP's offices in Augusta; materials received after 5:00 PM are not considered received until the following day. The person appealing a licensing decision must also send the DEP's Commissioner a copy of the appeal documents and if the person appealing is not the applicant in the license proceeding at issue the applicant must also be sent a copy of the appeal documents. All of the information listed in the next section must be submitted at the time the appeal is filed. Only the extraordinary circumstances described at the end of that section will justify evidence not in the DEP's record at the time of decision being added to the record for consideration by the Board as part of an appeal.

WHAT YOUR APPEAL PAPERWORK MUST CONTAIN

Appeal materials must contain the following information at the time submitted:

1. *Aggrieved Status.* The appeal must explain how the person filing the appeal has standing to maintain an appeal. This requires an explanation of how the person filing the appeal may suffer a particularized injury as a result of the Commissioner's decision.
2. *The findings, conclusions or conditions objected to or believed to be in error.* Specific references and facts regarding the appellant's issues with the decision must be provided in the notice of appeal.
3. *The basis of the objections or challenge.* If possible, specific regulations, statutes or other facts should be referenced. This may include citing omissions of relevant requirements, and errors believed to have been made in interpretations, conclusions, and relevant requirements.
4. *The remedy sought.* This can range from reversal of the Commissioner's decision on the license or permit to changes in specific permit conditions.
5. *All the matters to be contested.* The Board will limit its consideration to those arguments specifically raised in the written notice of appeal.
6. *Request for hearing.* The Board will hear presentations on appeals at its regularly scheduled meetings, unless a public hearing on the appeal is requested and granted. A request for public hearing on an appeal must be filed as part of the notice of appeal.
7. *New or additional evidence to be offered.* The Board may allow new or additional evidence, referred to as supplemental evidence, to be considered by the Board in an appeal only when the evidence is relevant and material and that the person seeking to add information to the record can show due diligence in bringing the evidence to the DEP's attention at the earliest possible time in the licensing process or that the evidence itself is newly discovered and could not have been presented earlier in the process. Specific requirements for additional evidence are found in Chapter 2.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS IN APPEALING A DECISION TO THE BOARD

1. *Be familiar with all relevant material in the DEP record.* A license application file is public information, subject to any applicable statutory exceptions, made easily accessible by DEP. Upon request, the DEP will make the material available during normal working hours, provide space to review the file, and provide opportunity for photocopying materials. There is a charge for copies or copying services.
2. *Be familiar with the regulations and laws under which the application was processed, and the procedural rules governing your appeal.* DEP staff will provide this information on request and answer questions regarding applicable requirements.
3. *The filing of an appeal does not operate as a stay to any decision.* If a license has been granted and it has been appealed the license normally remains in effect pending the processing of the appeal. A license holder may proceed with a project pending the outcome of an appeal but the license holder runs the risk of the decision being reversed or modified as a result of the appeal.

WHAT TO EXPECT ONCE YOU FILE A TIMELY APPEAL WITH THE BOARD

The Board will formally acknowledge receipt of an appeal, including the name of the DEP project manager assigned to the specific appeal. The notice of appeal, any materials accepted by the Board Chair as supplementary evidence, and any materials submitted in response to the appeal will be sent to Board members with a recommendation from DEP staff. Persons filing appeals and interested persons are notified in advance of the date set for Board consideration of an appeal or request for public hearing. With or without holding a public hearing, the Board may affirm, amend, or reverse a Commissioner decision or remand the matter to the Commissioner for further proceedings. The Board will notify the appellant, a license holder, and interested persons of its decision.

II. JUDICIAL APPEALS

Maine law generally allows aggrieved persons to appeal final Commissioner or Board licensing decisions to Maine's Superior Court, see 38 M.R.S.A. § 346(1); 06-096 CMR 2; 5 M.R.S.A. § 11001; & M.R. Civ. P 80C. A party's appeal must be filed with the Superior Court within 30 days of receipt of notice of the Board's or the Commissioner's decision. For any other person, an appeal must be filed within 40 days of the date the decision was rendered. Failure to file a timely appeal will result in the Board's or the Commissioner's decision becoming final.

An appeal to court of a license decision regarding an expedited wind energy development, a general permit for an offshore wind energy demonstration project, or a general permit for a tidal energy demonstration project may only be taken directly to the Maine Supreme Judicial Court. See 38 M.R.S.A. § 346(4).

Maine's Administrative Procedure Act, DEP statutes governing a particular matter, and the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure must be consulted for the substantive and procedural details applicable to judicial appeals.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have questions or need additional information on the appeal process, for administrative appeals contact the Board's Executive Analyst at (207) 287-2452 or for judicial appeals contact the court clerk's office in which your appeal will be filed.

Note: The DEP provides this INFORMATION SHEET for general guidance only; it is not intended for use as a legal reference. Maine law governs an appellant's rights.
