STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

NOTICE OF FINAL DETERMINATION TO REISSUE A WISCONSIN POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (WPDES) PERMIT No. WI-0025453-11-0

Permittee: VILLAGE OF SHELDON, W5559 Main Street, SHELDON, WI, 54766

Facility Where Discharge Occurs: Sheldon Village of, W5871 COUNTY HIGHWAY V V, SHELDON, WISCONSIN

Receiving Water And Location: Jump River in the Lower Jump River Watershed in the Upper Chippewa River Drainage Basin in Rusk County

Brief Facility Description: The Village of Sheldon owns and operates a domestic wastewater treatment system that consists of three aerated lagoons operated in series. The effluent (treated wastewater) is seasonally (May-September) disinfected with an ultraviolet system prior to discharge into the Jump River.

Permit Drafter's Name, Address and Phone: Sheri A. Snowbank, DNR, 810 W Maple St, Spooner, WI, 54801, (715) 635-4131

Basin Engineer's Name, Address, and Phone: Arthur Ryzak, N4103 Highway 27, Ladysmith, WI 54848, (715) 403-2924

Date Permit Signed/Issued: September 23, 2026
Date of Effectiveness: October 1, 2026
Date of Expiration: September 30, 2031

Public Informational Hearing Held On: N/A

Following the public notice period the Department has made a final determination to reissue the WPDES permit for the above-named permittee for this existing discharge. The permit application information from the WPDES permit file, comments received on the proposed permit and applicable Wis. Adm. Codes were used as a basis for this final determination.

The Department has the authority to issue, modify, suspend, revoke and reissue or terminate WPDES permits and to establish effluent limitations and permit conditions under ch. 283, Stats.

Following is a summary of significant comments and any significant changes which have been made in the terms and conditions set forth in the draft permit:

Comments Received from the Applicant, Individuals or Groups and Any Permit Changes as Applicable
A comment letter from Leif Tolokken, President of Lake Holcombe Improvement Association, on behalf of the association was received September 1, 2026. Comments have been edited for clarity and brevity.

Commenter's Summary: On behalf of the Lake Holcombe Improvement Association and the many individuals and families who rely on Lake Holcombe for recreation, ecological value, and economic livelihood, I am writing to express our opposition to the reissuance of the Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permit for the Village of Sheldon. We believe that reissuing the permit as it currently stands could have significant adverse impacts on water quality and the overall health of the Lake Holcombe ecosystem, and we urge consideration of necessary revisions to mitigate these concerns.

Comment: The Village of Sheldon's current discharge practices are contributing significant amounts of phosphorus to Lake Holcombe, resulting in severe ecological consequences. Specifically, the discharge adds an average of 21 pounds of phosphorus per month, which has the potential to fuel the growth of 10,500 pounds of algae each month within the lake. Over the course of a year, this translates to 252 pounds of phosphorus entering the lake, which drives the growth of approximately 126,000 pounds of algae annually. This is the equivalent of dumping 5,750 pounds of 10-10-10 lawn fertilizer directly into Lake Holcombe every year.

The Lake Holcombe Improvement Association is committed to the responsible stewardship of this vital natural resource. We recognize the critical importance of balancing municipal wastewater needs with the preservation of water quality, and we urge the Wisconsin DNR to consider the disproportionate environmental burden that the Village of Sheldon's discharge places on Lake Holcombe.

Department Response: Phosphorus discharged by wastewater treatment facilities is regulated and is based on the Phosphorus Rules as detailed in NR 102 (Water Quality Standards For Wisconsin Surface Waters) and NR 217, Wis. Adm. Code (Effluent Standards And Limitations For Phosphorus). Currently there are three types of limit calculations used to determine if an effluent phosphorus limit is needed for a wastewater treatment facility or point source: a technology based effluent limit (TBEL), a water quality-based effluent limit (WQBEL) determined by receiving water criteria and a WQBEL based on a Total Daily Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) allocation.

1. A TBEL of 1.0 mg/L is included in a WPDES wastewater permit if a facility discharges more than the threshold of 150 pounds per month (s. NR 217.04(1)(a)1 Wis. Adm. Code). The Village discharges an average of 21

pounds per month (2023 data) which is below the threshold; therefore, a TBEL is not applicable this permit term.

2. Based on the size and classification of the stream, the categorical water quality criterion for the Jump River is 100 ug/L. This criterion and instream background phosphorus data are used to calculate the stream criteria-based WQBELs. The calculated WQBEL is 12 mg/L. The 30-day p99 value (3.38 mg/L) is lower than the calculated WQBEL. The Village of Sheldon does not have an industry discharging to the community and the effluent concentration data is consistent for domestic household waste, therefore it was determined that there is not a reasonable potential for phosphorus levels to exceed the calculated limit. A WQBEL was not included in the WPDES permit.

3. The final type of WBEL based on an approved TMDL. The facility does not lie within the boundaries of any approved total maximum daily load (TMDL) area, therefore a phosphorus WQBEL based on a TMDL allocation was not required in the WPDES permit. If a TMDL is implemented for the watershed in the future, an associated limit would be evaluated for the facility at that time.

The commenter focused on the phosphorus loading from the Village of Sheldon. There are 17 wastewater facilities that discharge to the Holcombe Flowage watershed. Using 2010-2012 data, the Pollutant Ratio Estimation Tool (PRESTO) found on https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/SurfaceWater/PRESTO.html estimated that there is a total of 14,405 pounds discharged each year from the combined facilities. The annual average nonpoint phosphorus load is 319,217 pound per year or approximately 92% of the phosphorus contributions to the watershed. Nonpoint sources encompass all discharges not attributed to a wastewater facility, including stormwater pollution, septic systems and agricultural practices. The Lake Holcombe Improvement Association's desire to improve the health of the Holcombe Flowage is to be commended, but a whole watershed plan is needed to more accurately determine the controllable contributing factors.

No changes were made to the permit based on this comment.

Procedural change from the public noticed permit: In addition to the individual WPDES permit identified above the permittee also has coverage under General Permit, WI-0012345-0, "PFAS Monitoring for Sewage Sludge (Biosolids) Generators". This supplemental permit requires sludge monitoring for PFAS by June 30, 2027. Language has been added to the individual permit to restate and consider the monitoring requirements for PFAS.

Comments Received from EPA or Other Government Agencies and Any Permit Changes as Applicable
No comments received

As provided by s. 283.63, Stats., and ch. 203, Wis. Adm. Code, persons desiring further adjudicative review of this final determination may request a public adjudicatory hearing. A request shall be made by filing a verified petition for review with the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources within 60 days of the date the permit was signed (see permit signature date above). Further information regarding the conduct and nature of public adjudicatory hearings may be found by reviewing ch. NR 203, Wis. Adm. Code, s. 283.63 Stats., and other applicable law, including s. 227.42, Stats.

Information on file for this permit action may be inspected and copied at either the above-named permit drafter's address or the above-named basin engineer's address, Monday through Friday (except holidays), between 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Information on this permit action may also be obtained by calling the permit drafter at (715) 635-4131 or by writing to the Department. Reasonable costs (15 cents per page for copies and 7 cents per page for scanning) will be charged for copies of information in the file other than the public notice and fact sheet. Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodation, including the provision of informational material in an alternative format, will be made to qualified individuals upon request.