

# Dept. of Natural Resources: Seeks comments and data to assess surface water quality

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**MADISON** – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is seeking public assistance to improve evaluation of the state’s surface water quality. Assistance is requested in two forms: guidance comments and water quality data. The submission period for both runs from January 22 to March 1, 2019.

## Guidance Comments

The Wisconsin Consolidated Assessment and Listing Methodology, known as WisCALM, provides guidance to assess surface water quality and trends against standards set by the Clean Water Act. The methodology is updated for each biennial surface water assessment cycle and the current guidance is being updated for the 2020 cycle.

This year’s updates include:

- An updated definition of the Impaired Waters List and creation of the Restoration Waters List and Healthy Waters List;
- Chlorophyll-a lake listing benchmark and terminology change; and
- Addition of a Quick Link section with links including Wisconsin administrative code, federal guidance documents, and monitoring strategies and protocols among others.

“Wisconsin’s surface water quality is good and improving in many areas, but by

updating the technical guidance and maintaining the impaired waters list, the state works to address changes through targeted improvement plans,” said Ashley Beranek, DNR water resources management specialist.

A copy of the draft guidance can be downloaded by clicking on the following link: [Draft 2020 WisCALM](#). For more about these changes, visit [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and refer to the [Water condition assessments & reporting page](#). Public comments on the latest WisCALM guidance can be submitted to: [dnrimpairedwaters@wisconsin.gov](mailto:dnrimpairedwaters@wisconsin.gov) or via mail to Ashley Beranek, DNR, Bureau of Water Quality, 101 S. Webster St. WQ/3 Madison, WI 53707.

### Surface Water Data

Every two years, the DNR requests that citizens and interested groups submit their surface water data (biological, chemical and physical). Data meeting specified requirements will be evaluated, along with department data, to assess the quality of the state’s water resources and to pinpoint problem areas. In accordance with the Clean Water Act, DNR uses these assessments to prepare a statewide Integrated Water Quality Report (“Integrated Report”), which includes an updated list of impaired waters.

DNR is especially interested in data that:

- Documents improvement due to implementation of pollution control practices;
- Documents healthy waters;
- Supports planning for restoration or protection of waterbodies;
- Identifies public health risks; or
- Is from waterbodies in the Northeast Lakeshore areas, Fox River (Southeast) basin, or Grant, Platte, Sugar or Pecatonica River basins.

To enable DNR to efficiently process the data, a specific data submittal format is used. Data must be submitted electronically and the information must be submitted in specific Excel spreadsheet formats, along with quality assurance documentation. Templates and further instructions are available on the [Surface Water Assessments webpage](#).