



# **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency**

STATE OF MINNESOTA

## **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency**

INDUSTRIAL DIVISION

PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO REISSUE

NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES)/

STATE DISPOSAL SYSTEM (SDS) PERMIT MN0046256

Public Comment Period Begins: May 17, 2012

Public Comment Period Ends: June 18, 2012

Current Permit Issued: April 20, 2007

Current Permit Expiration Date: March 31, 2012

### **Name and Address of Permittee:**

ALLETE Inc dba Minnesota Power Inc  
30 W Superior St  
Duluth, MN 55802-2093

### **Facility Name and Location:**

Minnesota Power - Arrowhead HVDC  
5818 Morris Thomas Rd  
T50N, R15W, Section 31,  
Hermantown, St. Louis County, Minnesota

**Receiving Water:** Unnamed Wetland (Class 2D,3D,4C,5,6 water)

### **Description of Permitted Facility**

The principal activity at this site is electrical power conversion and distribution. Incoming direct current is converted to alternating current. The electrical converter units are cooled by a forced air/glycol coolant system. Heat is removed from the glycol in a cooling tower. When ambient air temperature exceeds 25 degrees Fahrenheit, the glycol system is enhanced by operating cooling towers. Cooling water is supplied by on-site wells. Sulfuric acid is added to the water for pH adjustment and to prevent biofouling in the recirculating, evaporative cooling towers. Additional biological control is achieved through the use of *the smart technology of the 3DT TRASAR system*.

Periodically, the cooling tower discharges to an on-site detention pond. Maximum cooling tower bleed-off is 5,000 gallons per day; average bleed-off rate is 3,000 to 5,000 gallons per day. Because the cooling towers are only utilized during the warmer months, this is an intermittent, seasonal discharge, with a potential discharge range from March to November. In addition to cooling tower blowdown, the terminal building's floor and footing drains also discharge to the retention pond. Floors are normally hosed down, at a maximum of two times per year. No chemicals are used for floor washing. The detention pond has an estimated capacity of 42,392 gallons.

Prior to discharge to the retention pond, cooling tower blowdown from the two towers is treated for the removal of zinc from the waste stream. The treatment system consists of:

- 1) Two sediment pre-filters (50 and 20-micron) on dual valved paths.
- 2) A single 3.6 ft<sup>3</sup> activated carbon filter; and
- 3) Two sequential selective cation exchange tanks.

Operationally, the Permittee proposes to exchange the carbon and SCC media with fresh media twice per operation season (at ≈4 month intervals). Resin exchange would occur once per operating season.

Effluent limitations have been developed in accordance with best professional judgment and the protection of the receiving water for a fishable/swimmable designated beneficial use and for meeting the criteria for Great Lakes Initiative pollutants.

### **Preliminary Determination on the Draft Permit**

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Commissioner has made a preliminary determination to reissue this NPDES/SDS permit for a term of approximately five years.

A draft permit is available for review at the MPCA office at the St. Paul address listed below, at the Duluth regional office and on-line at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/news/data/index.cfm?PN=1>.

A copy of the draft permit will be mailed to you if the MPCA receives your written or oral request at this office. If you have questions about this draft permit or the Commissioner's preliminary determination, please contact Deborah Idzorek at 651-757-2704.

### **Written Comments**

You may submit written comments on the conditions of the draft permit or on the Commissioner's preliminary determination.

Written comments must include the following:

1. A statement of your interest in the permit application or the draft permit.
2. A statement of the action you wish the MPCA to take, including specific references to sections of the draft permit that you believe should be changed.
3. The reasons supporting your position, stated with sufficient specificity as to allow the Commissioner to investigate the merits of your position.

### **Petition for Public Informational Meeting**

You also may request that the MPCA Commissioner hold a public informational meeting. A public informational meeting is an informal meeting that the MPCA may hold to solicit public comment and statements on matters before the MPCA, and to help clarify and resolve issues.

A petition requesting a public informational meeting must include the following information:

1. A statement identifying the matter of concern.
2. The information required under items 1 through 3 of "Written Comments," identified above.
3. A statement of the reasons the MPCA should hold a public informational meeting.
4. The issues that you would like the MPCA to address at the public informational meeting.

### **Petition for Contested Case Hearing**

You also may submit a petition for a contested case hearing. A contested case hearing is a formal evidentiary hearing before an administrative law judge. In accordance with Minn. R. 7000.1900, the MPCA will grant a petition to hold a contested case hearing if it finds that: (1) there is a material issue of fact in dispute concerning the application or draft permit; (2) the MPCA has the jurisdiction to make a determination on the disputed material issue of fact; and (3) there is a reasonable basis underlying the disputed material issue of fact or facts such that the holding of the contested case hearing would allow the introduction of information that would aid the MPCA in resolving the disputed facts in making a final decision on the draft permit. A material issue of fact means a fact question, as distinguished from a policy question, whose resolution could have a direct bearing on a final MPCA decision.

A petition for a contested case hearing must include the following information:

1. A statement of reasons or proposed findings supporting the MPCA decision to hold a contested case hearing according to the criteria in Minn. R. 7000.1900, as discussed above.
2. A statement of the issues proposed to be addressed by a contested case hearing and the specific relief requested or resolution of the matter.

In addition and to the extent known, a petition for a contested case hearing should also include the following information:

1. A proposed list of prospective witnesses to be called, including experts, with a brief description of proposed testimony or summary of evidence to be presented at a contested case hearing.
2. A proposed list of publications, references, or studies to be introduced and relied upon at a contested case hearing.
3. An estimate of time required for you to present the matter at a contested case hearing.

### **MPCA Decision**

You may submit a petition to the Commissioner requesting that the MPCA Citizens' Board (Board) consider the permit issuance. To be considered timely, the petition must be received by the MPCA by 4:30 p.m. on the date the public comment period ends, identified on page 1 of this notice. Under the provisions of Minn. Stat. § 116.02, subd. 6(4), the decision whether to issue the permit and, if so, under what terms will be presented to the Board for decision if: (1) the Commissioner grants the petition requesting the matter be presented to the Board; (2) one or more Board members request to hear the matter before the time the Commissioner makes a final decision on the permit; or (3) a timely request for a contested case hearing is pending. You may participate in the activities of the Board as provided in Minn. R. 7000.0650.

The written comments, requests, and petitions submitted on or before the last day of the public comment period will be considered in the final decision on this permit. If the MPCA does not receive written comments, requests, or petitions during the public comment period, MPCA staff as authorized by the Board, will make the final decision on the draft permit.

Comments, petitions, and/or requests must be submitted in writing on or before the end date of the public comment period identified on page 1 of this notice to:

Deborah A. Idzorek, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
520 Lafayette Road N  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4194

**Topographic Map of Permitted Facility**

