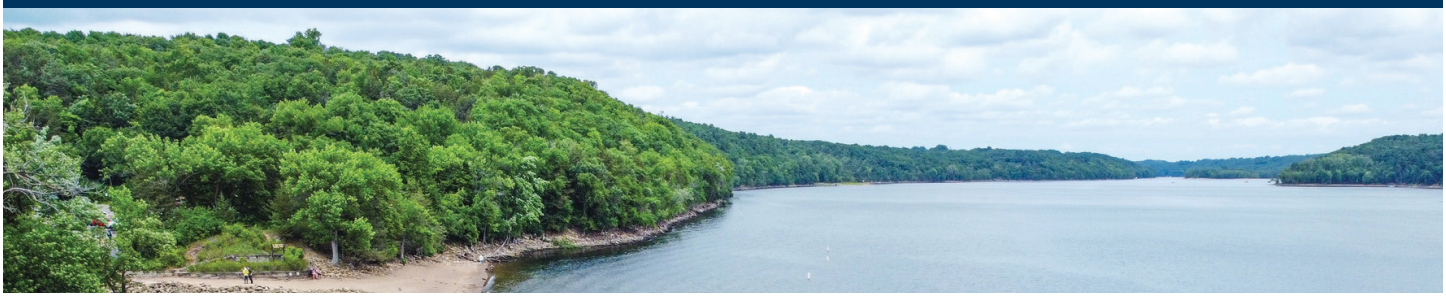

Efficiency and good governance package

As part of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) commitment to efficiency and good governance, the Governor proposes to make existing programs work better for Minnesotans while maintaining environmental protections.

Expedite wastewater permitting

Current law (Minn. Stat. § 116.03) requires both a 30-day pre-public notice review period for the permittee to preview their draft permit, and a 60-day public comment period on wastewater discharge permits for all publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities. However, these requirements impose unnecessary delays on permitting when wastewater treatment facilities don't need the additional review time and the project doesn't draw public interest. The Governor proposes shortening the permitting process by up to two months by adding flexibility to the statute in two ways:

- Wastewater treatment facilities would be able to waive their 30-day review period, subject to approval by MPCA.
- With the approval of the MPCA commissioner, facilities would be able to request that the public comment period be reduced from 60 to 30 days.

The MPCA would consider these requests based on public or Tribal interest in the permit.

Notify Tribal governments of sewage releases

In the event of releases of untreated or undertreated sewage, Minn. Stat. § 115.061(c) requires publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities and domestic sewer system owners to notify all potentially impacted downstream water users so that protective actions can be taken, such as avoiding swimming or protecting drinking water supplies. Tribal governments should be among those notified of sewage releases as they are important partners in protecting public health. The Governor recommends expressly adding Tribal government notification to this statute.

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