

Are Waters in Wisconsin Meeting Water Quality Standards?

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Missed reports, staff reductions, and a lack of enforcement actions call into question the DNR's Wastewater Permitting and Enforcement efforts as 350 industrial and 650 municipal permittees and about 250 large farms, mostly CAFO dairies, add to potential problems.

MADISON - "The bottom line is: Are waters meeting water quality standards?" George Meyer told the Audit Committee at a recent hearing.

"[Wisconsin is] adding hundreds of impaired waters every year," Mr. Meyer added. "It's because of discharged nitrates and phosphorus."

"Regulations and laws are only as good as enforcement." Mr. Meyer said. "In the last few years [there has been] a substantial reduction in enforcement actions both in the wildlife area and the environmental area."

Mr. Meyer knows about enforcing laws to protect our natural resources. For eight years, he served as the DNR Secretary under Governor Thompson. His 30-year DNR career also included ten years as head of the department's enforcement efforts. He now runs Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, a nonpartisan coalition of nearly 200 conservation groups.



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