§ 131.12 Antidegradation policy.

(a) The State shall develop and adopt a statewide antidegradation policy and identify the methods for implementing such policy pursuant to this subpart. The antidegradation policy and implementation methods shall, at a minimum, be consistent with the following:

(1) Existing instream water uses and the level of water quality necessary to protect the existing uses shall be maintained and protected.

(2) Where the quality of the waters exceed levels necessary to support propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife and recreation in and on the water, that quality shall be maintained and protected unless the State finds, after full satisfaction of the intergovernmental coordination and public participation provisions of the State’s continuing planning process, that allowing lower water quality is necessary to accommodate important economic or social development in the area in which the waters are located. In allowing such degradation or lower water quality, the State shall assure water quality adequate to protect existing uses fully. Further, the State shall assure that there shall be achieved the highest statutory and regulatory requirements for all new and existing point sources and all cost-effective and reasonable best management practices for nonpoint source control.

(3) Where high quality waters constitute an outstanding National resource, such as waters of National and State parks and wildlife refuges and waters of exceptional recreational or ecological significance, that water quality shall be maintained and protected.

(4) In those cases where potential water quality impairment associated with a thermal discharge is involved, the antidegradation policy and implementing method shall be consistent with section 316 of the Act.

§ 131.13 General policies.

States may, at their discretion, include in their State standards, policies generally affecting their application and implementation, such as mixing zones, low flows and variances. Such policies are subject to EPA review and approval.

Subpart C—Procedures for Review and Revision of Water Quality Standards

§ 131.20 State review and revision of water quality standards.

(a) State review. The State shall from time to time, but at least once every three years, hold public hearings for
§ 131.21 EPA review and approval of water quality standards.

(a) After the State submits its officially adopted revisions, the Regional Administrator shall either:

(1) Notify the State within 60 days that the revisions are approved, or

(2) Notify the State within 90 days that the revisions are disapproved. Such notification of disapproval shall specify the changes needed to assure compliance with the requirements of the Act and this regulation, and shall explain why the State standard is not in compliance with such requirements. Any new or revised State standard must be accompanied by some type of supporting analysis.

(b) The Regional Administrator’s approval or disapproval of a State water quality standard shall be based on the requirements of the Act as described in §§ 131.5 and 131.6, and, with respect to Great Lakes States or Tribes (as defined in 40 CFR 132.2), 40 CFR part 132.

(c) How do I determine which water quality standards are applicable for purposes of the Act? You may determine which water quality standards are applicable water quality standards for purposes of the Act from the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If—</th>
<th>Then—</th>
<th>Unless or until—</th>
<th>In which case—</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) A State or authorized Tribe has adopted a water quality standard that is effective under State or Tribal law and has been submitted to EPA before May 30, 2000…</td>
<td>the State or Tribe’s water quality standard is the applicable water quality standard for purposes of the Act…</td>
<td>EPA has promulgated a more stringent water quality standard for the State or Tribe that is in effect…</td>
<td>the EPA-promulgated water quality standard is the applicable water quality standard for purposes of the Act until EPA withdraws the Federal water quality standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) A State or authorized Tribe adopts a water quality standard that goes into effect under State or Tribal law on or after May 30, 2000…</td>
<td>once EPA approves that water quality standard, it becomes the applicable water quality standard for purposes of the Act…</td>
<td>EPA has promulgated a more stringent water quality standard for the State or Tribe that is in effect…</td>
<td>the EPA promulgated water quality standard is the applicable water quality standard for purposes of the Act until EPA withdraws the Federal water quality standard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(d) When do I use the applicable water quality standards identified in paragraph (c) above? Applicable water quality standards for purposes of the Act are the minimum standards which must be used when the CWA and regulations implementing the CWA refer to water quality standards.