



Indiana Department of Environmental Management

We Protect Hoosiers and Our Environment.

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Eric J. Holcomb
Governor

Brian Rockensuess
Commissioner

June 26, 2024

Via Email to: tmashall@portage-in.com
Ms. Tracie Marshall, Superintendent
Portage Utilities
5500 Old Porter Road
Portage, Indiana 46368

Dear Ms. Marshall:

Re: Inspection Summary Letter
Portage Water Reclamation Facility
NPDES Permit No. IN0024368
Portage, Porter County

An inspection of the above-referenced facility or location was conducted by a representative of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Southeast Regional Office, pursuant to IC 13-18-3-9. A summary of the inspection is provided below:

Date(s) of Inspection: June 25, 2024
Type of Inspection: Complaint Investigation
Inspection Results: Conditions evaluated were found to be satisfactory at the time of the inspection.

Effective immediately, IDEM is initiating a program strongly encouraging domestic wastewater utilities to perform cybersecurity vulnerability assessments, and to take actions to mitigate identified vulnerabilities and increase the cybersecurity resilience of Indiana's water sector. Utilities can choose any assessment tool appropriate for the water sector, but IDEM is highlighting the following websites for information and helpful vulnerability assessment tools made available from the U.S. EPA and the American Water Works Association: <https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/epa-cybersecurity-water-sector> and <https://www.awwa.org/Resources-Tools/Resource-Topics/Risk-Resilience/Cybersecurity-Guidance>. IDEM will continue to share important updates on the cybersecurity of the water sector.

A copy of the NPDES Wastewater Facility Inspection Report is enclosed for your records. Please direct any response to this letter and any questions to Nicholas Ream at 219-730-1691 or by email to nream@idem.IN.gov.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Amick, Director

Enclosure



NPDES Wastewater Facility Inspection Report

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

NPDES Permit Number: IN0024368		Facility Type: Municipality		Facility Classification: Major		Facility Classification: IV		TEMPO AI ID	
Date(s) of Inspection: June 25, 2024									
Type of Inspection: Complaint Investigation		Complaint Tracking: 113080							
Name and Location of Facility Inspected: Portage Water Reclamation Facility 5500 Old Porter Road Portage IN 46368				County: Porter		Receiving Waters: Burns Ditch		Permit Expiration Date: 8/31/2025	
						Design Flow: 5.3MGD			
On Site Representative(s): First Name Last Name Title Email Phone Karl Nelson Certified Operator knelson@portage-in.com									
Was a verbal summary of findings presented to the on-site representative? Yes									
Certified Operator: Karl Nelson		Number: 18286	Class: IV	Effective Date: 7-1-22	Expiration Date: 6-30-25	Email: knelson@portage-in.com			
Cyber Security Contact: Name: _____ Email: _____									
Responsible Official: Ms. Tracie Marshall, Superintendent 5500 Old Porter Road Portage, Indiana 46368					Permittee: Portage Utilities Email: tmashall@portage-in.com Phone: _____ Fax: _____				
					Contacted? No				
INSPECTION FINDINGS									
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Conditions evaluated were found to be satisfactory at the time of the inspection. (5) <input type="radio"/> Violations were discovered but corrected during the inspection. (4) <input type="radio"/> Potential problems were discovered or observed. (3) <input type="radio"/> Violations were discovered and require a submittal from you and/or a follow-up inspection by IDEM. (2) <input type="radio"/> Violations were discovered and may subject you to an appropriate enforcement response. (1)									
AREAS EVALUATED DURING INSPECTION									
<i>(S = Satisfactory, M = Marginal, U = Unsatisfactory, N = Not Evaluated)</i>									
N	Receiving Waters	N	Facility/Site	N	Self-Monitoring	N	Enforcement		
S	Effluent	S	Operation	N	Flow Measurement	N	Pretreatment		
N	Permit	N	Maintenance	N	Laboratory	N	Effluent Limits Compliance		
N	Collection System	N	Sludge Disposal	N	Records/Reports	S	Other: Complaint		
DETAILED AREA EVALUATIONS									
Effluent: Comments: The effluent was clear and free of color at the time of the inspection.									
Operation: Comments: The primary clarifiers, secondary clarifiers, and effluent were observed during the complaint investigation. All units of treatment that were observed appeared to be operating efficiently.									
Effluent Limits Compliance: No 1. Were DMRs reviewed as part of the inspection? Comments:									
Other: Complaint Comments: Other: Complaint category was rated as satisfactory.									

On June 24, 2024, a complaint was made to IDEM alleging that the Portage Water Reclamation Facility had doubled their volume of dried sludge, creating an odor issue. The complainant indicated there were concerns regarding flies and other vectors associated with the solids, and indicated their spouse was bitten the previous year by a fly, which necessitated medical care. This complaint was entered into the TEMPO database and issued TEMPO number 113080.

The June 25, 2024, complaint investigation only focused on compliance with the NPDES permit and did not include evaluation of sludge disposal or handling covered under the land application permit, INLA000073.

The solids storage area was observed prior to entering the wastewater plant. Sludge was stored in rows in the northeast corner of the property and soil with woody vegetation was observed immediately south of the sludge. While the sludge did have an odor, it was not overly strong at the time of the investigation.

Upon entering the wastewater plant, the inspectors noted the strong odor of the headworks building as we neared the structure. The odor was consistent with experiences from previous inspections. Mr. Karl Nelson, the facilities certified operator, was made aware of the complaint. Several areas were inspected at the wastewater plant, including the primary and secondary clarifiers. No unusual odors were detected near the clarifiers or effluent.

Mr. Nelson stated that the rows of sludge had been turned on June 24, 2024, which may have increased any potential odors. Mr. Nelson also stated that the piles of soil and woody vegetation south of the sludge drying bed was material removed in preparation for the installation of solar panels.

Regarding the NPDES permit, no violations were observed or noted regarding the complaint. A voicemail was left with the complainant regarding the results of the complaint investigation. The inspectors recommend closing the complaint (TEMPO #113080).

IDEM REPRESENTATIVE

Inspector Name:	Email:	Phone Number:
Nicholas Ream	nream@idem.IN.gov	219-730-1691
Other staff participating in the inspection:		
Name(s)	Phone Number(s)	
David Greinke	219-730-4035	

IDEM MANAGER REVIEW

IDEM Manager:	Date:
Mark A. Amick	6/26/2024

Inspection Photographs



Facility: Portage Water Reclamation Facility
Photographer: Nicholas Ream
Date: 6/25/2024 Time: 1:40:00 PM
Others Present: Dave Greinke
Location/Description: North view of the sludge rows on the sludge drying pad in the northeast corner of the solids drying area.



Facility: Portage Water Reclamation Facility
Photographer: Nicholas Ream
Date: 6/25/2024 Time: 1:40:00 PM
Others Present: Dave Greinke
Location/Description: East view of soil removed in preparation for the installation of solar panels. This pile was located immediately south of the sludge drying pad.



Facility: Portage Water Reclamation Facility
Photographer: Nicholas Ream
Date: 6/25/2024 Time: 1:40:00 PM
Others Present: Dave Greinke
Location/Description: North view of the covered sludge holding area, which was mostly empty.