

2020 Water Quality Lists

Comment Period

A public comment period is being held from Oct. 15 to Nov. 22. Public comments will be incorporated in the final draft 2020 lists submitted to EPA for approval in April, 2020.

Wisconsin's Consolidated Assessment and Listing Methods (WisCALM)

The CWA requires states to document the methodology used to assess its waters, including how the state makes decisions to add or delete waters from the Impaired Waters List. WisCALM provides guidance to DNR staff conducting assessments of water quality.



Every two years, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources publishes a list of waters considered impaired, as required by the federal Clean Water Act (CWA). Impaired waters are those that do not meet water quality standards and may not support fishing, swimming, recreating or public health and welfare.

For the first time two lists are now being used to categorize impairment listings. The Impaired Waters List indicates that they require a restoration plan while the Restoration Waters List includes those that already have an EPA-approved plan. Defining the Impaired Waters List in this way aligns Wisconsin methods with neighboring states.

The public can comment on changes proposed for the draft 2020 Impaired Waters and Restoration Waters lists beginning Oct. 15 to Nov. 22.

The comprehensive draft 2020 Impaired Waters List contains 1,546 listings, of which 125 are newly added in 2020.

A majority of the new listings, 80%, are waters exceeding the total phosphorus criteria (see Figure 1). Of these, 65% already have some type of restoration plan in place.

The Restoration Waters List grew by 144 listings with the 2019 approval of the Wisconsin River Basin TMDL.

Delistings

Eighty-four waterbodies are slated for delisting, the majority based on a clean up of Mercury listings.

- A subset of Mercury listings were covered by the statewide fish consumption advisory put in place in 2001, but were not delisted until this cycle.
- Sediment remediation resulted in the removal of 5 listings.

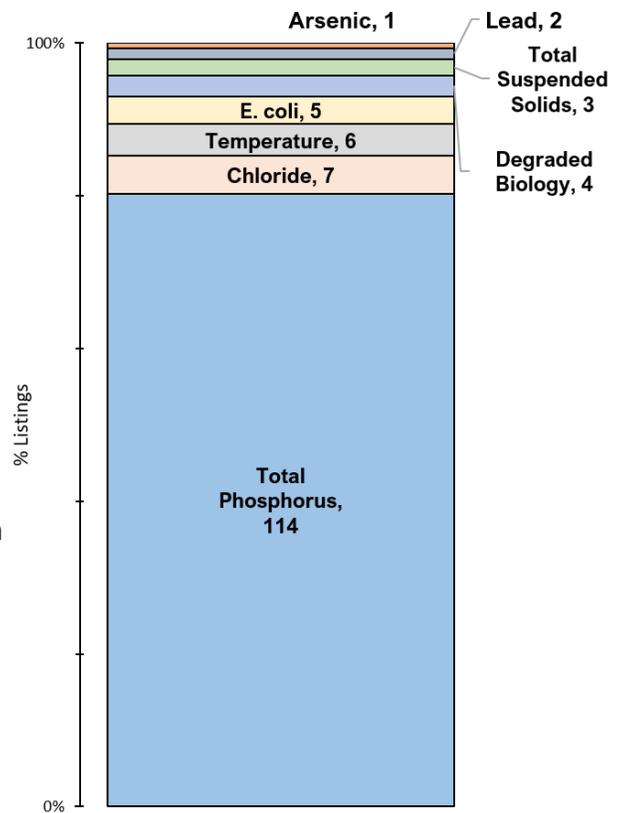


Figure 1. New 2020 pollutant listings by count and percent. These new listings are for both the Impaired Waters and Restoration Waters lists.

For more information regarding Wisconsin's Water Quality Lists visit: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/impairedwaters/>



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