



# Water Quality Permitting for Data Centers

*The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is committed to advancing environmental protection and justice for all communities and ecosystems in Oregon, now and for future generations.*

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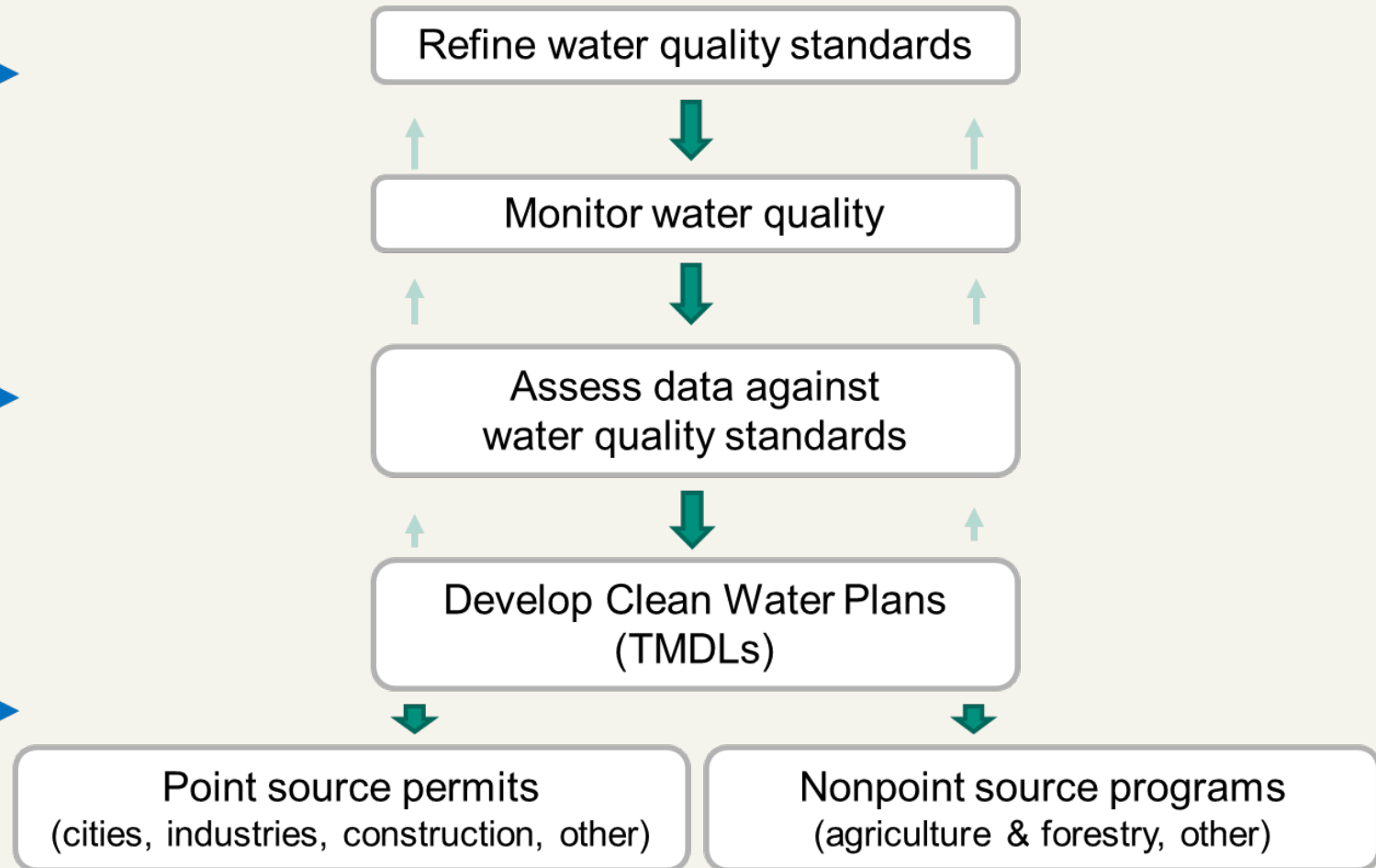
March 27, 2026  
Oregon Data Center Advisory Committee Meeting

# Federal Clean Water Act Framework

**Protect Uses of Water** →  
(drinking, fishing, swimming)

**Monitor and Evaluate Conditions** →

**Use Data and Science to Improve Conditions** →

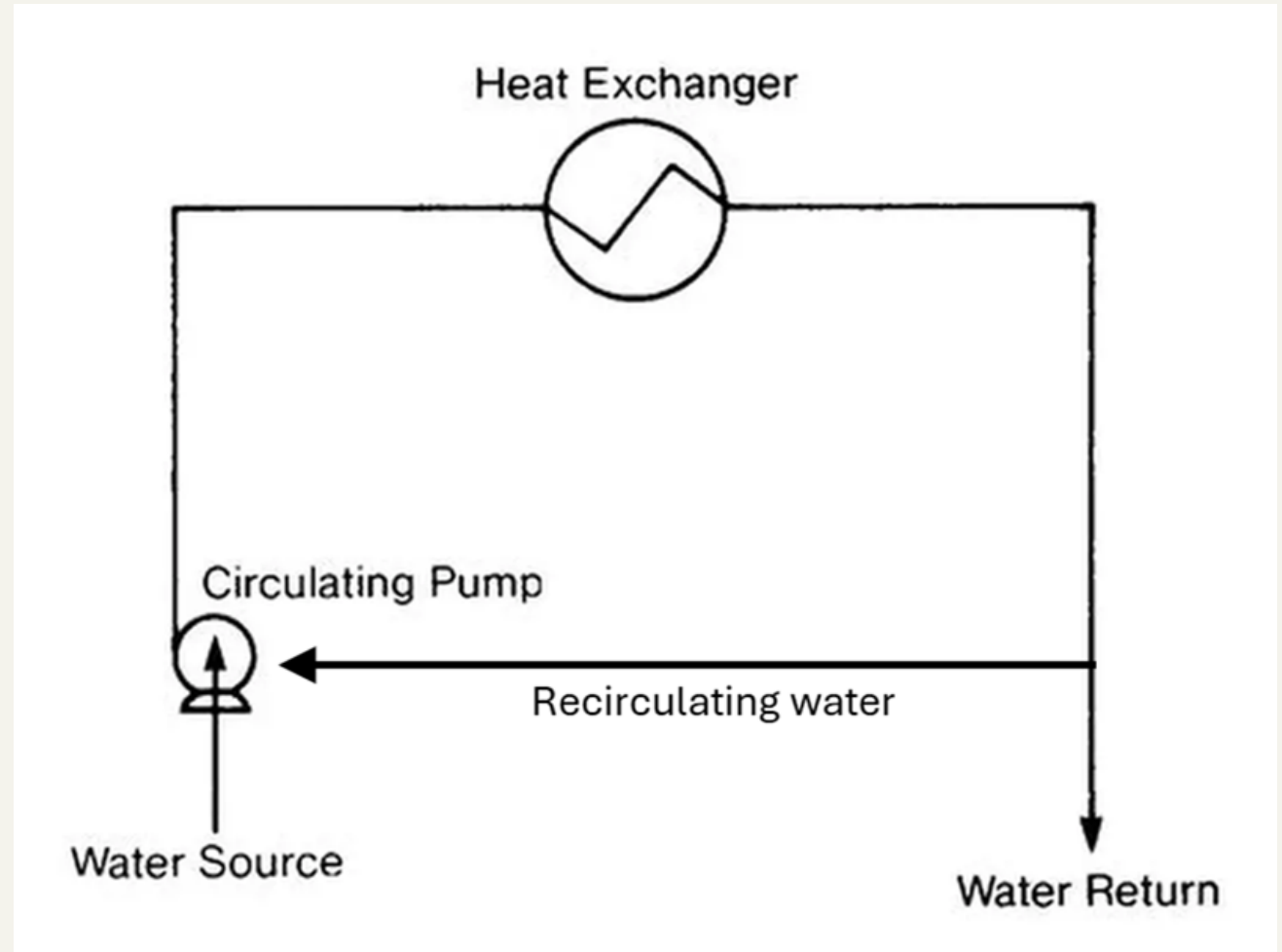


# Groundwater

- Many uses of groundwater
- Vital to the public health, economy and environment of Oregon
- Most of Oregon's residents depend on groundwater for their water supply
- Technical review by DEQ to ensure groundwater is protected

# Non-contact Cooling Water

- Water used solely to cool machinery and equipment
- Is water or wastewater discharged?



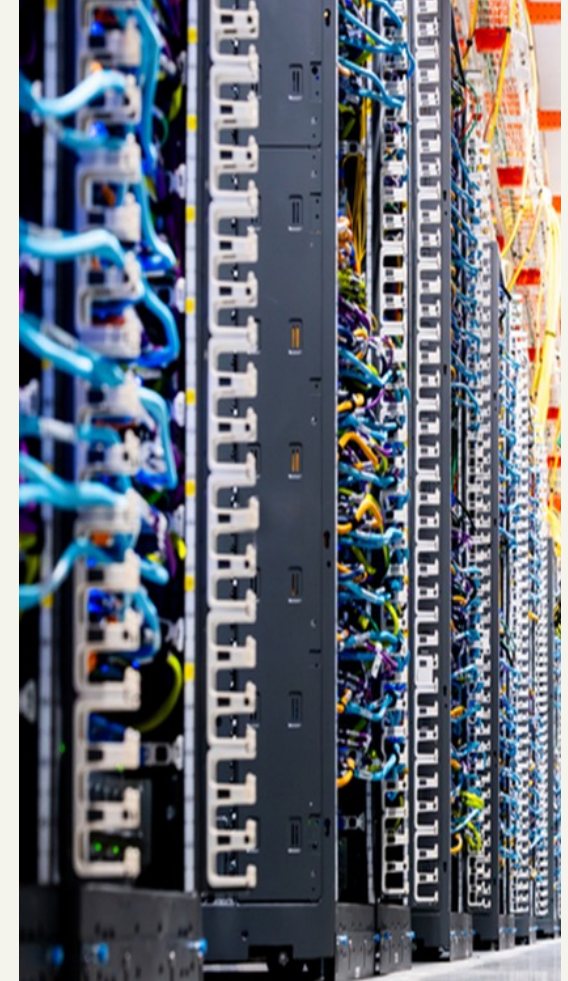
# WPCF Permit vs. NPDES Permit

## Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) Permit:

Authorize discharge of treated effluent to land

## National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit:

Authorize discharge of treated effluent to surface water



Amazon News

# General Permit vs. Individual Permit

## General Permits:

- Standardized permit
- Multiple facilities with similar operations and types of discharges

## Individual Permits

- Site-specific permit
- One facility and discharge



Umatilla facility  
From: [aboutamazon.com](http://aboutamazon.com)

# Four Permit Options

## WPCF General Permit 2501

discharge to land | max 25,000 gallons/day

## WPCF Individual Industrial Permit

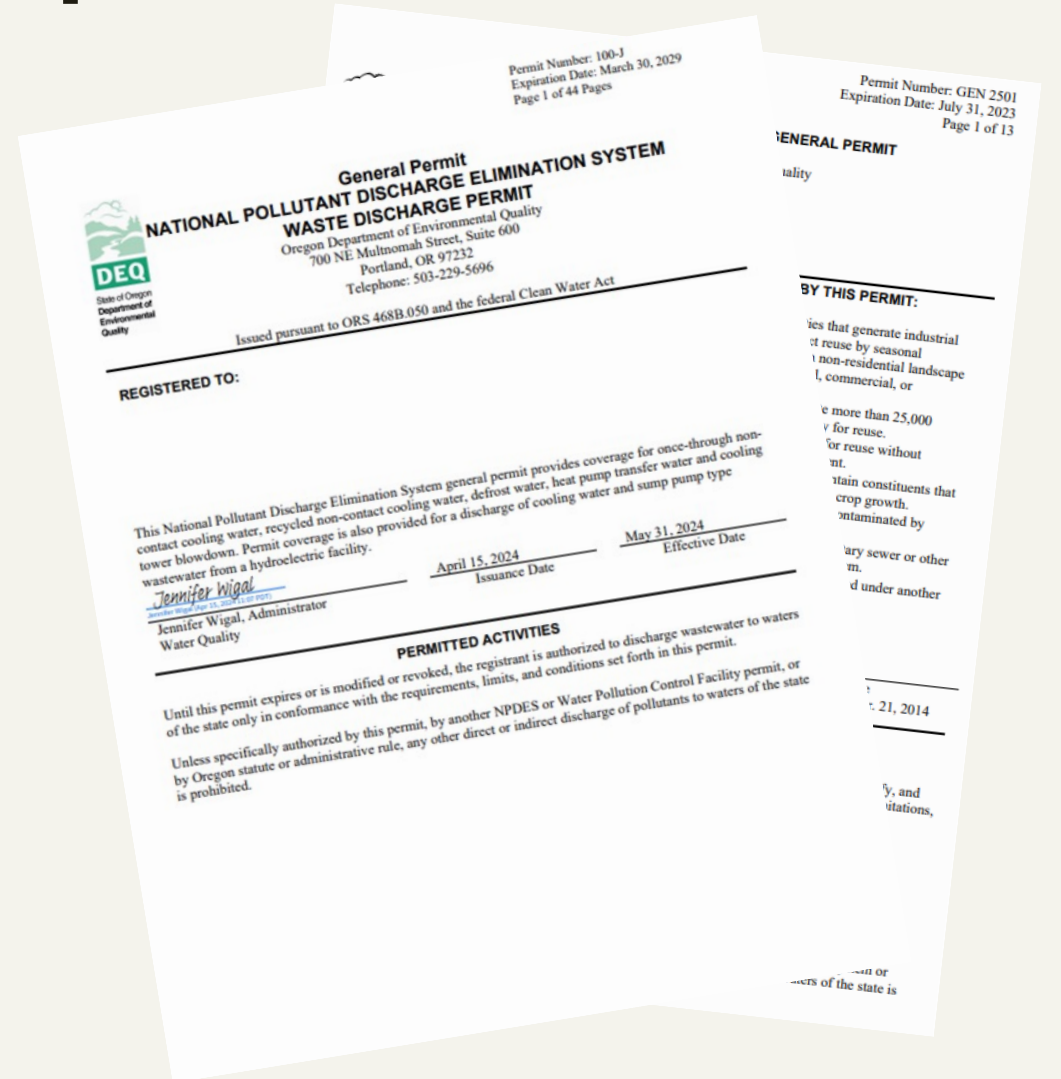
discharge to land | > 25,000 gallons/day

## NPDES General Permit 100-J

discharge to water | max 500,000 gallons/day

## NPDES Individual Industrial Permit

discharge to water | > 500,000 gallons/day



# Municipal Pretreatment Programs

- Number of Facilities
  - Portland, The Dalles, Hillsboro, Hermiston, Boardman, and Umatilla, have data centers connected to their sanitary sewer systems
- Key Considerations
  - Permitted by the city
  - Volume of discharge
  - Heat loading
  - Added treatment



The Dalles facility  
from Costar.com

# Challenges and Recommendations

## Challenges:

- Wastewater characteristics
  - Source water
  - Additives

## Recommendations:

- Come to us early in the process
- Transparency
- Completed applications
- Consultants knowledgeable with Oregon's requirements

# Questions?

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