

Part I. Surface Water Standards with General, Statewide Application

9VAC25-260-50. Numerical criteria for dissolved oxygen, pH, and maximum temperature***.

CLASS	DESCRIPTION OF WATERS	DISSOLVED OXYGEN (mg/l)****		pH****	Max. Temp. (°C)
		Min.	Daily Avg.		
I	Open Ocean	5.0	--	6.0-9.0	--
II	Tidal Waters in the Chowan Basin and the Atlantic Ocean Basin	4.0	5.0	6.0-9.0	--
II	Tidal Waters in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries	see 9VAC25-260-185		6.0-9.0	
III	Nontidal Waters (Coastal and Piedmont Zones)	4.0	5.0	6.0-9.0	32
IV	Mountainous Zones Waters	4.0	5.0	6.0-9.0	31
V	Stockable Trout Waters	5.0	6.0	6.0-9.0	21
VI	Natural Trout Waters	6.0	7.0	6.0-9.0	20
VII	Swamp Waters	*	*	3.7-8.0*	**

*This classification recognizes that the natural quality of these waters may fluctuate outside of the values for D.O. and pH set forth above as water quality criteria in Class I through VI waters. The natural quality of these waters is the water quality found or expected in the absence of human-induced pollution. Water quality standards will not be considered violated when conditions are determined by the board to be natural and not due to human-induced sources. The board may develop site specific criteria for Class VII waters that reflect the natural quality of the waterbody when the evidence is sufficient to demonstrate that the site specific criteria rather than narrative criterion will fully protect aquatic life uses. Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System limitations in Class VII waters shall not cause significant changes to the naturally occurring dissolved oxygen and pH fluctuations in these waters.

**Maximum temperature will be the same as that for Classes I through VI waters as appropriate.

***The water quality criteria in this section do not apply below the lowest flow averaged (arithmetic mean) over a period of seven consecutive days that can be statistically expected to occur once every 10 climatic years (a climatic year begins April 1 and ends March 31). See 9VAC25-260-310 and 9VAC25-260-380 through 9VAC25-260-540 for site specific adjustments to these criteria.

****For a thermally stratified man-made lake or reservoir in Class III, IV, V, or VI waters that are listed in 9VAC25-260-187, these dissolved oxygen and pH criteria apply only to the epilimnion of the waterbody. When these waters are not stratified, the dissolved oxygen and pH criteria apply throughout the water column.

Statutory Authority

§62.1-44.15 of the Code of Virginia; Clean Water Act (33 USC § 1251 et seq.); 40 CFR Part 131.

Historical Notes

Derived from VR680-21-01.5, eff. May 20, 1992; amended, Virginia Register Volume 14, Issue 4, eff. December 10, 1997; Volume 17, Issue 16 and Volume 18, Issue 17, eff. June 5, 2002; Volume 20, Issue 9, eff. February 12, 2004; Volume 21, Issue 23, eff. June 24, 2005; Volume 23, Issue 26, eff. August 14, 2007; Volume 26, Issue 12, eff. February 1, 2010; Volume 32, Issue 26, eff. June 27, 2017; Volume 39, Issue 9, eff. April 18, 2023.