



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUL 13 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

OFFICE OF  
WATER

**SUBJECT:** Mixing Zones

**FROM:** Benjamin H. Grumbles  
Assistant Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Grumbles", written over the printed name and title.

**TO:** Regional Administrators  
Regions 1-10

I am pleased to share with you the *Compilation of EPA Mixing Zone Documents*, a collection of mixing zone regulatory and guidance documents that have been published to date. EPA has long recognized that the Clean Water Act and its implementing regulations allow for mixing zones and that it is an acceptable and authorized practice for states to allow mixing zones, provided they are used in a manner that protects the designated use of a water body. The Office of Water developed this collection of documents to improve implementation of mixing zones by creating a "one-stop-shop" that allows for easy access to documents pertaining to mixing zones. Until now, these statements on mixing zones could only be found distributed in various handbooks, memos, and other documents that were developed over the years.

EPA's water quality standards regulation gives states, territories, and authorized tribes the discretion to include in their water quality standards mixing zone policies and implementation procedures (40 CFR Part 131.13). Mixing zones provide a useful link between water quality standards and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits. Water quality-based effluent limits are derived from and comply with water quality standards and may incorporate dilution based on mixing zone policies where appropriate.

The *Compilation* consists of overviews and reference information for the complete versions of seven technical and policy guidance documents, four modeling documents, and the 2000 Great Lakes Rule. It also contains a table that shows which of the documents address certain mixing zone topics.

In addition, the *Compilation* includes appendices containing the following information on mixing zones:

- Summaries and reference information for 3 Regional policy and guidance documents;
- Reference information for 16 state regulatory and guidance documents;
- Reference information for 4 EPA documents and 2 other federal documents that have been updated or superseded by newer guidance documents and rules; and
- Descriptions of EPA training and modeling resources that are available to states, territories, tribes, and the public.

This will be an important source of information for states, territories, and authorized tribes who are establishing or revising mixing zone provisions in their standards or implementing mixing zone provisions through NPDES permits.

This Compilation can be ordered in print form for free by calling the National Service Center for Environmental Publications at 1-800-490-9198 (request document # EPA-823-R-006-03). It is also available in a web-based form at [www.epa.gov/waterscience/policy.htm](http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/policy.htm).

I encourage you to share this Compilation with your staff and many stakeholders. If you have any questions or would like to share feedback on the usefulness of these materials, please contact Ms. Grace Robiou at 202-566-2975 or by email at [robiou.grace@epa.gov](mailto:robiou.grace@epa.gov).