



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

MAY 8 2009

4SESD-MTSB-QAS

RECEIVED

Mr. Pat Donnelly, Branch Manager
WW/GW Laboratory Certification Branch
NC DWQ Laboratory Section
1623 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1623

MAY 13 2009

DWQ
LABORATORY CERTIFICATION

Dear Mr. Donnelly:

Your request for exemption from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Pollution Discharge Elimination System's (NPDES) Discharge Monitoring Report – Quality Assurance (DMR-QA) program has been reviewed by EPA, Region 4. The information you provided indicates that the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) proficiency testing (PT) program provides adequate QA to replace EPA's DMR-QA study program. The State program components cover all areas required by EPA's program. These areas are:

1. Requirements through State codes or regulations that cover all analyses for NPDES compliance at the permittee level.
2. A proficiency testing program that requires all NPDES and/or other program laboratories to successfully analyze PT samples annually for all analyses and tests by required methodology (40 CFR 136.3 Tables 1A – 1H).
3. A database that tracks all laboratories and their PT results, noting any partial responding or non-responding permittees.
4. A program with sufficient equipment for reanalysis of failed PT sample results and the ability to decertify laboratories that have not completed a successful study within the program's allotted time frame.

DENR's Certification Program satisfies all of the above and provides QA procedures that are as stringent as EPA's DMR-QA study program. However, proper oversight of the program will still be required for DENR to be exempt from the DMR-QA program. Annual reports (similar to a DMR-QA pass/fail report) shall be submitted to EPA Region 4, which includes the statistical information for North Carolina's WW/GW certification program with regard to DMR-QA analytes. This statistical information should include pass/fail rates for laboratories, pass/fail rates for analytes, number of laboratories in the program and number of audits conducted. Also, a review of the system after a year of operation, including an on-site assessment, will provide the information necessary to verify that the requirements of the

Region 4 DMR-QA study program have been maintained. This assessment will be performed by the Region 4 DMR-QA coordinator. After the first year, if the program adequately performs as a viable substitute for the DMR-QA program, an on-site assessment will only be made every three years, similar to the State Drinking Water Certification Program Assessments.

If these requirements are met, North Carolina's Laboratory Certification Program will continue to be a viable substitute for US EPA's DMR-QA program.

If you have any questions please contact Mr. Ray Terhune, Region 4 DMR-QA Coordinator (706) 355-8557.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas F. Mundrick", written over a horizontal line.

Douglas F. Mundrick, Chief
Clean Water Enforcement Branch
Water Protection Division

cc: Patrick Yellin
Danny France
Marilyn Maycock
Ray Terhune
Christopher Plymale
Cesar Zapata