

THRESHOLDS – NPDES permit related to application of pesticides

Once you determine that you need an NPDES permit and that you are eligible for coverage under this permit, thresholds for each use pattern are important to understand. The *purpose* of thresholds are to establish two categories of operators (small and large). The smaller category of operators (those that don't exceed a threshold) has fewer obligations under the permit.

The *calculation* of thresholds depend on the use pattern. Some thresholds are based on the only on the amount of water affected by pesticide application (e.g., Use pattern #2 and #3) because spraying on land is not part of these use patterns. Other thresholds (#1, #4, and #5) are based on the amount of land and water being affected by your pesticide application, recognizing that it is likely that a small percentage of the total application may be into state waters. In the cases of #1, #4 and #5, this method of calculating based on land and water is *merely* a way to distinguish people who do a little pesticide application work from those doing a lot of pesticide application work. It is not to determine how much of the work relates to water.

Use patterns with thresholds
(annual, cumulative, statewide, for all treatment area – land & water)

- #1 Mosquitoes/flying pests
–8,960 acres = 1 mile² x 14 applications
- #2 Aquatic vegetation
–In water, 200 acres or 20 miles at edge
- #3 Aquatic animals
–In water, 20 acres or 20 miles at edge
- #4 Forest pests
–6,400 acres = 10 mile² = 1 mile² x 10 applications
- #5 Intrusive vegetation (rights of way, property)
–100 miles or 100 acres

Once the distinction is made based on the threshold calculation, then those not exceeding the threshold have fewer obligations. For example, a “for-hire applicator” not meeting a threshold does not need to register with DHEC.

