

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **DBA Supports EPA's Proposed Revisions to Clean Water Act**

Recent changes proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) could mean good news for growing and expanding dairy and livestock operations in the state of Wisconsin, according to the Dairy Business Association (DBA).

The revision introduced to the EPA's Clean Water Act could change the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program's permitting process to allow operators to self-certify their dairy and livestock facilities as "no discharge," meaning that they do not plan to discharge into the state's waterways.

"DBA believes that giving owners and operators the option to self-certify "no discharge" will streamline the NPDES permit process and allow states to better allocate and more effectively utilize resources," said Laurie Fischer, DBA Executive Director.

At this time, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) carries out the regulations of the EPA by handling the state-level permits, or Wisconsin Pollution Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permits. By state rules, which are more stringent than NPDES standards, each dairy and livestock operation large enough to classify as a Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) must obtain this permit based on the assumption that they will discharge into waterways.

The proposed rules will also help maintain that facilities designed, constructed and maintained to prevent discharges will not face additional enforcement risks for failing to obtain a permit in the unlikely event of an accidental discharge.

"DBA strongly agrees with EPA's position that determining whether a CAFO should seek a NPDES permit should be based on an objective assessment of the facility's operations, not simply an animal "head count," Fischer added. Fischer went on cite that the current permitting process has created delays for the state's CAFOs.

If the self-certification process is thoroughly completed, all interested parties will have access to the same information, therefore increasing transparency and allowing the public to better understand the permitting process. DBA believes the appropriate duration for a self-certification is five years, coinciding with the maximum timeline under which NPDES permits are issued.

The Dairy Business Association is an industry organization comprised of dairy producers, corporate and allied industry supporters. DBA promotes the growth and success of all dairy farms in Wisconsin by fostering a positive business and political environment. For more information about DBA, please visit our website at [www.widba.com](http://www.widba.com).

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