

## EXECUTIVE DIGEST

### SURFACE WATER QUALITY DIVISION

---

**INTRODUCTION** This report contains the results of our performance audit of the Surface Water Quality Division, Bureau of Environmental Protection, Department of Natural Resources, for the period October 1, 1992 through June 30, 1994.

---

**AUDIT PURPOSE** This performance audit was conducted as part of the constitutional responsibility of the Office of the Auditor General. Performance audits are conducted on a priority basis related to the potential for improving effectiveness and efficiency.

---

**BACKGROUND** The Surface Water Quality Division consists of seven sections: Administration, Compliance and Enforcement, Field Operations, Great Lakes and Environmental Assessment, Municipal Facilities, Permits, and Planning and Special Programs. The division's mission is to protect and enhance the quality of the State's surface waters for the benefit of present and future generations. The division's authority to protect and enhance the State's surface water quality is derived from several statutes and the rules developed under them, including: the Michigan Water

Resources Commission Act (Act 245, P.A. 1929, as amended), the Waterworks and Sewerage Systems Act (Act 98, P.A. 1913, as amended), the Michigan Environmental Protection Act (Act 127, P.A. 1970), and the State Clean Water Assistance Act (Act 317, P.A. 1988). In addition, many of the requirements of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, commonly referred to as the Clean Water Act, are administered by the division under the authority of the Michigan statutes and rules.

For fiscal year 1992-93, the division had 269.5 full-time equated staff and expended \$13.9 million. By June 1994, full-time equated staff had declined to 237.5.

---

**AUDIT OBJECTIVE  
AND  
CONCLUSION**

**Audit Objective:** To assess the division's effectiveness in directing efforts to protect and enhance the quality of the State's surface waters to ensure that the surface waters support all designated uses, such as agricultural, industrial, and public water supply; full body contact recreation; and use by aquatic life and wildlife.

**Conclusion:** We concluded that the division was generally effective in directing efforts to protect and enhance the quality of the State's surface waters to ensure that surface waters support all designated uses. However, we noted several reportable conditions relating to establishment of program goals, testing of surface waters, the division's program plan agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and inspections of minor dischargers (Findings 1 through 4).

---

**AUDIT SCOPE  
AND  
METHODOLOGY**

Our audit scope was to examine the program and other records of the Surface Water Quality Division for the period October 1, 1992 through June 30, 1994. Our audit was conducted in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and, accordingly, included such tests of the records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

We determined which of the division's sections were responsible for evaluating and controlling sources of point source (pollutants discharged from discrete sources) and nonpoint source (pollution not attributable to a discrete point of discharge) surface water pollution. We assessed the procedures for water quality monitoring and testing. We also assessed the division's procedures for establishing standards and limits for effluent discharge and for monitoring permittees for violations of those standards. We visited selected district offices and interviewed appropriate field personnel. We reviewed selected permittee files for documentation of inspections. We also reviewed follow-up of reported violations of permit levels and complaints. In addition, we assessed the nonpoint source program and analyzed division reports and other data relating to water quality.

---

**AGENCY  
RESPONSE**

Our audit report contains 4 findings and recommendations. The division informed us that it agreed with all of the findings and recommendations.