

Council Directive of 21 May 1991 concerning  
urban waste water treatment (91/271/EEC)

COUNCIL DIRECTIVE

of 21 May 1991

concerning urban waste water treatment

(91/271/EEC)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular 130s thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission<sup>(1)</sup>,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament<sup>(2)</sup>,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee<sup>(3)</sup>,

Whereas the Council Resolution of 28 June 1988 on the protection of the North Sea and of other waters in the Community<sup>(4)</sup> invited the Commission to submit proposals for measures required at Community level for the treatment of urban waste water;

Whereas pollution due to insufficient treatment of waste water in one Member State often influences other Member States' waters; whereas in accordance with Article 130r, action at Community level is necessary;

Whereas to prevent the environment from being adversely affected by the disposal of insufficiently-treated urban waste water, there is a general need for secondary treatment of urban waste water;

Whereas it is necessary in sensitive areas to require more stringent treatment; whereas in some less sensitive areas a primary treatment could be considered appropriate;

Whereas industrial waste water entering collecting systems as well as the discharge of waste water and disposal of sludge from urban waste water treatment plants should be subject to general rules or regulations and/or specific authorizations;

Whereas discharges from certain industrial sectors of biodegradable industrial waste water not entering urban waste water treatment plants before discharge to receiving waters should be subject to appropriate requirements;

Whereas the recycling of sludge arising from waste water treatment should be encouraged; whereas the disposal of sludge to surface waters should be phased out;

Whereas it is necessary to monitor treatment plants, receiving waters and the disposal of sludge to ensure that the environment is protected from the adverse effects of the discharge of waste waters;

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Whereas it is important to ensure that information on the disposal of waste water and sludge is made available to the public in the form of periodic reports;

Whereas Member States should establish and present to the Commission national programmes for the implementation of this Directive;

Whereas a Committee should be established to assist the Commission on matters relating to the implementation of this Directive and to its adaptation to technical progress,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DIRECTIVE:

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- (1) OJ No C 1, 4.1.1990, p. 20 and  
OJ No C 287, 15.11.1990, p. 11.
- (2) OJ No C 260, 15.10.1990, p. 185.
- (3) OJ No C 168, 10.7.1990, p. 36.
- (4) OJ No C 209, 9.8.1988, p. 3.