



MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT REGIONAL OPERATIONS BRANCH

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING SYSTEM (EMS) DATA UPLOAD REQUIREMENTS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is EMS and why am I required to submit?

The Environmental Monitoring System (EMS) is a database designed to capture data covering physical/chemical and biological analyses performed on water, air, solid waste discharges and ambient monitoring sites throughout the province. Most authorizations under Environmental Management Act (EMA) require monitoring data be uploaded to EMS.

This requirement is intended to consolidate our data collection and storage processes used to look for and identify trends and environmental outcomes related to your authorization.

2. Why does the ministry require this information be submitted to EMS?

The ministry uses your data for a variety of reasons, including assessing compliance and conducting cumulative environmental effects assessments. Electronic data submission eases the use of data and improves our ability to communicate with you about your site.

3. Am I required to upload my effluent discharge monitoring data to EMS?

This requirement is being requested for all authorizations with annual discharge fees exceeding \$20,000, or securities and mine reclamation bonds exceeding \$100,000, and for some larger municipal authorizations related to liquid and solid waste management plans. If you have received this letter and you have an authorized effluent discharge(s), this requirement applies to you.

4. I have multiple authorizations under the EMA at my site. Do I add up the annual fees/security/reclamation bonds for all my authorizations to determine if I meet the threshold?

No. Each of your authorizations should be assessed against the threshold independently. Do **not** add up the annual fees/security/reclamation bonds.

5. What is effluent discharge monitoring data?

Data collected to show the quality of effluent (liquid) discharge that is conditionally authorized to be introduced into the environment (into water or onto land). These substances are generally, but not always, subject to monitoring requirements and discharge limits for specific parameters for the protection of the environment.

6. Where are the monitoring requirements for effluent discharge(s) identified in my authorization?

Generally, sections titled “*Authorized Discharges*” and “*Monitoring Requirements*” identify the location of effluent discharge monitoring site(s) and detail parameters to be monitored.

If you are unable to determine the monitoring requirements for your current authorization, please contact your regional ministry office to confirm.

7. My authorization data is already being uploaded to EMS, is there anything further I need to do?

No, continue uploading data as you have been - there should be no change to your authorization requirements. It is recommended that you confirm all effluent discharges are being uploaded to EMS.

8. Who can upload the data to EMS?

The uploading of data to EMS (also known as electronic data transfer [EDT]) is to be performed by a private laboratory that is capable of interfacing with the EMS database. This should be done after the authorization holder has taken steps to ensure the quality, accuracy and correctness of the monitoring data.

Information about the EMS database can be found at the following website:

http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/wamr/ems_internet/index.html

9. Are all BC laboratories set up to upload data to EMS?

No, not all laboratories are set up to upload data to EMS. Refer to STEP 6 in the Step-By-Step Guide for further information.

10. Is there a cost associated with uploading the data to EMS?

Fees are determined by your lab. Depending on the laboratory, there may or may not be an additional cost associated with uploading this data.

11. Who is responsible for the quality of my authorization data prior to it being uploaded to EMS?

It is the responsibility of the authorization holder to ensure the accuracy of the data being uploaded to EMS. Please work with your laboratory to ensure your data meets professional quality standards.

12. If my monitoring data is being uploaded to EMS am I still required to e-mail routine monitoring data directly to the Ministry of Environment?

Yes. The upload of effluent monitoring data to the EMS database does NOT relieve you from submitting routine monitoring data to the Routine Environmental Reporting Submission Mailbox (RERSM) at EnvironmentalReporting@gov.bc.ca. For information on RERSM refer to the following website:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/waste-management/waste-discharge-authorization/data-and-report-submissions/routine-environmental-reporting-submission-mailbox>