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# Maryland's Water Quality Standards Regulation Timeline

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Maryland Department of the Environment  
CAP Workgroup Meeting  
June 9, 2025



# When does Maryland update regulations?

- Triennial Review cycle ★
  - Clean Water Act requirement
  - States must review standards and have public hearing every 3 years
- Can update standards outside of TR, but usually coordinate with the cycle since it is a long process





# What is usually considered?

WQS Staff will coordinate with other MDE Programs as necessary and may evaluate the following topics:

304(a) criteria  
recommendations

New temperature /  
biological data  
informing potential  
stream redesignations

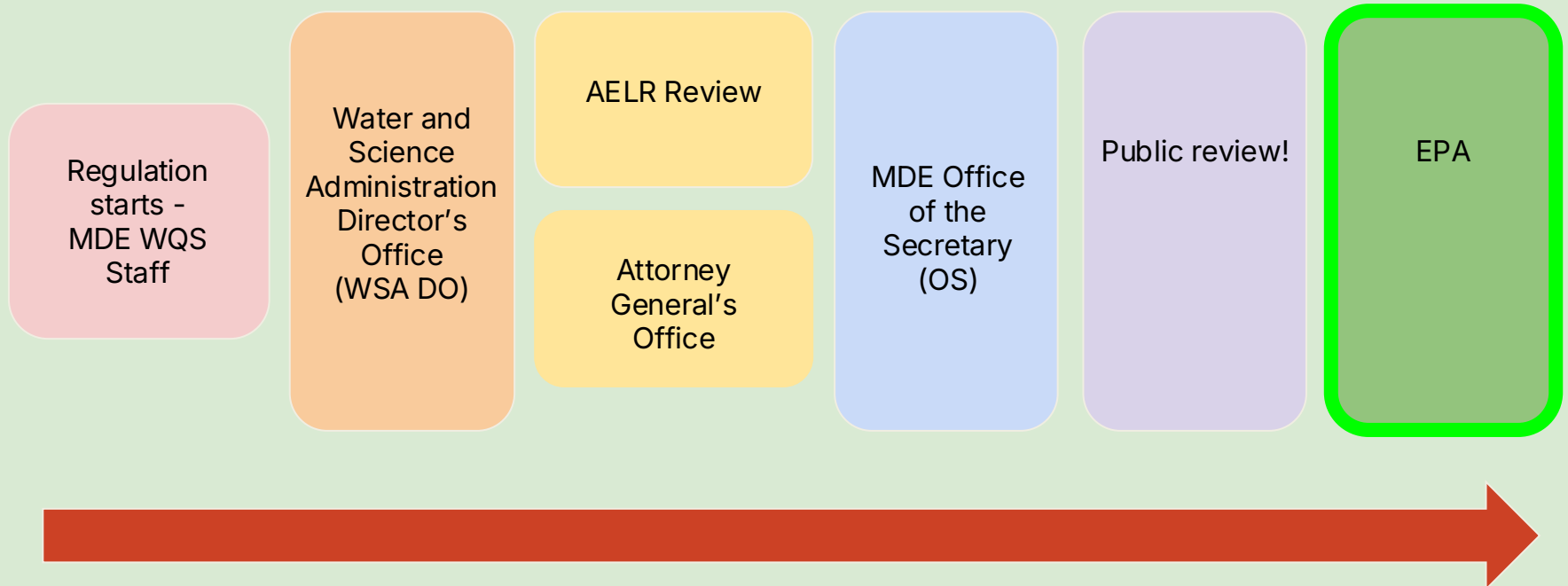
New biological data for  
Tier II identification

New modeling  
estimates for  
Chesapeake Bay  
restoration variances

Any previous comments  
or recommendations not  
fully addressed in last TR  
Cycle for consideration in  
current TR Cycle



# Approval pathways





# Regulations Timeline

## Step 1

MDE WQS Staff determine topics that need to be addressed in regulatory update

## Step 2

Internal coordination at MDE with MDE Program Managers, WSA Director's Office, Attorney General Office.

**~1 – 2 months**

## Step 3

With WSA DO approval, Advance Notice of Public Rulemaking posted with the topics the Dept is considering for adoption.

*No deadline*

## Step 4

Regulation change package finalized. Sent to Office of the Attorney General for formal, preliminary legal review

**45 days**

## Step 5

Any AG Office concerns addressed. Final package circulated for WSA and Office of the Secretary (OS) sign-off

**~2 weeks**

## Step 6

Regulation change package sent for AELR Review

**2 weeks**



# Regulations Timeline

## Step 7

Address AELR concerns, announce upcoming public hearing and comment period  
**Min 45 days before hearing date**

## Step 8

Submit Notice of Proposed Action, marks the start of the comment period

**Public comment period at least 30 days**

## Step 9

Hold public hearing  
Public hearing held during the public comment period, **at least 45 days after initial notification.**

## Step 10

After the public comment period, address comments. Evaluate if any major changes are needed, or if can proceed

**~30 days**

## Step 11

Coordinate with WSA DO for final review and approval; submit Notice of Final Action to finalize regulations

**~30 days**

## Step 12

Regulations are effective **10 days after**, & available for MDE Secretary sign-off **45 days after MD Register publication**



**TR package is assembled and sent to EPA for their review and approval  
Regulations final upon EPA approval**



# Contact Info for WQS

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**Watershed Protection,  
Restoration, and Planning  
Program**



Photo taken by Matt Stover, Maryland Dept. of the Environment



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# Maryland's Integrated Report Timeline

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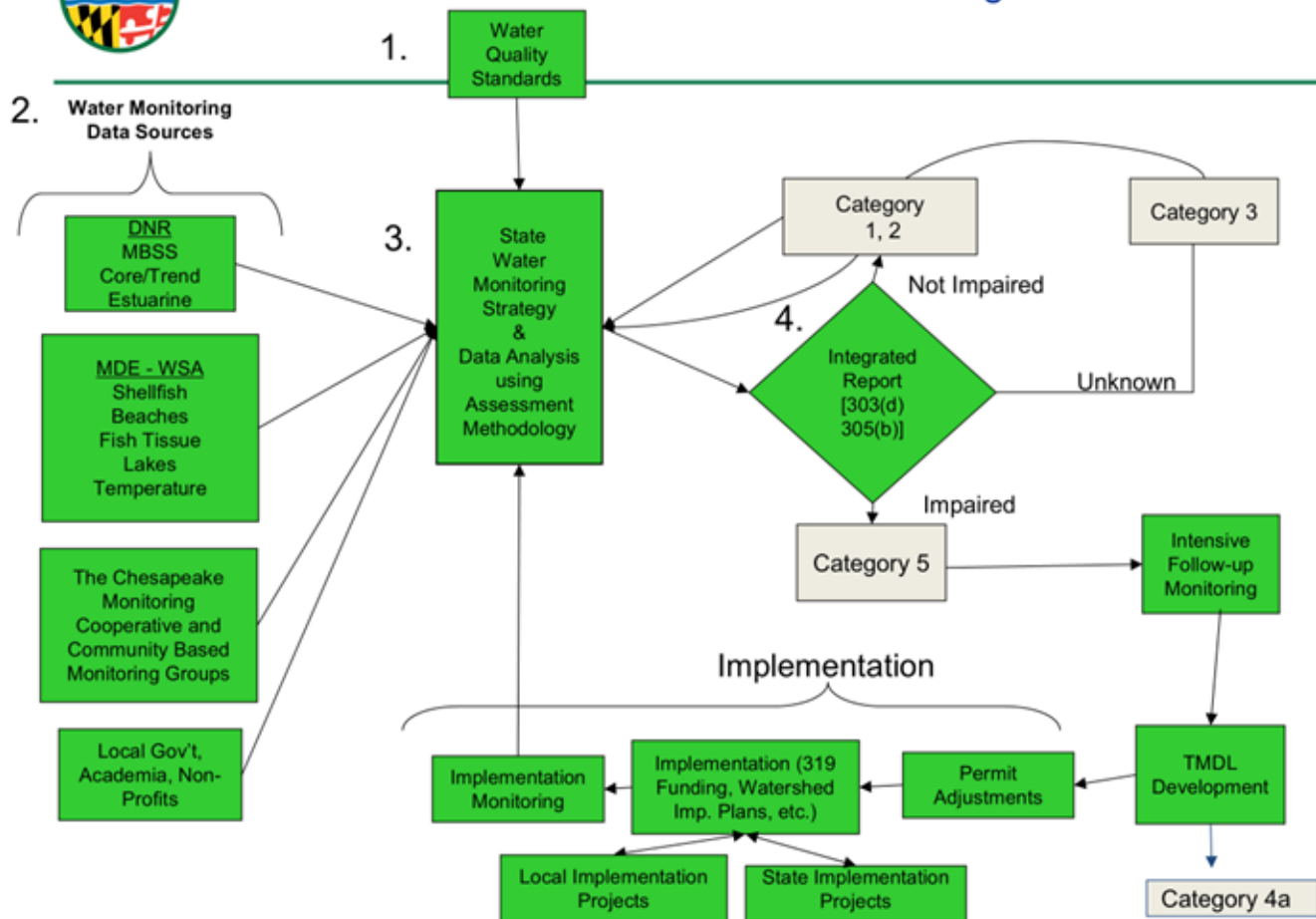
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# CWA Background –

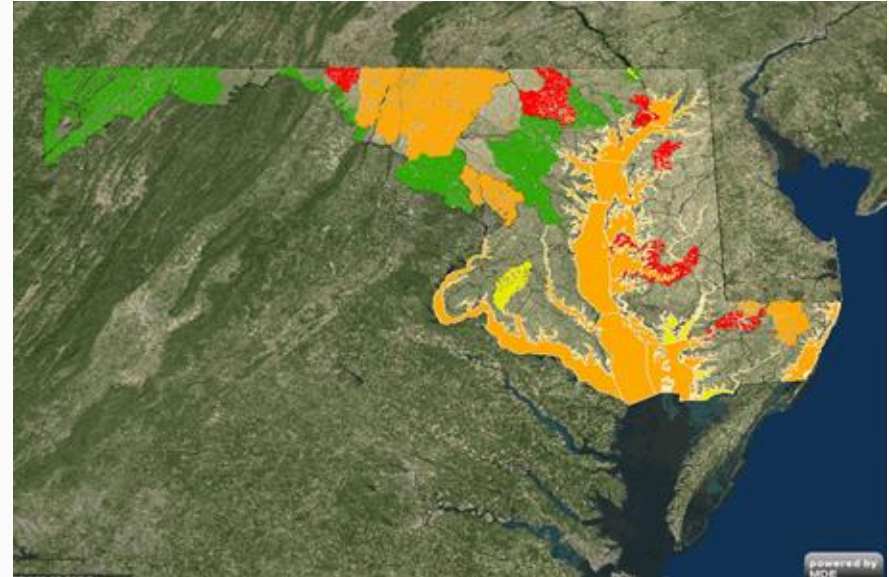
## An Adaptive Management Process





# Integrated Report

- Required by Clean Water Act (Sections 303(d), 314, and 305(b))
- Report the results of statewide water quality monitoring
- Biennial Report- Due April 1<sup>st</sup> of even years
- Documentation of the water quality status of surface waters in Maryland
- Identify and Prioritize waters needing:
  - TMDLs,
  - restoration, and
  - Protection





# Timeline

Task	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26
Data Solicitation																	
Data Compilation & Cleaning																	
Data Analysis																	
Assessment Methodologies (Draft/Final)																	
Public Notice – Methods																	
Database & GIS Updates																	
ATTAINS & Summary Numbers																	
Report Writing & Review																	
Public Review & Meetings																	
Finalize & Submit to EPA																	

1-Apr-26



Maryland  
Department of  
the Environment

# Contact Info for the IR

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