

WAC 173-401-645 Emergency provision. (1) Definition. An "emergency" means any situation arising from sudden and reasonably unforeseeable events beyond the control of the source, including acts of God, which situation requires immediate corrective action to restore normal operation, and that causes the source to exceed a technology-based emission limitation under the permit, due to unavoidable increases in emissions attributable to the emergency. An emergency shall not include noncompliance to the extent caused by improperly designed equipment, lack of preventative maintenance, careless or improper operation, or operator error.

(2) Effect of an emergency. An emergency constitutes an affirmative defense to an action brought for noncompliance with such technology-based emission limitations if the conditions of subsection (3) of this section are met.

(3) Criteria. The affirmative defense of emergency shall be demonstrated through properly signed, contemporaneous operating logs, or other relevant evidence that:

(a) An emergency occurred and that the permittee can identify the cause(s) of the emergency;

(b) The permitted facility was at the time being properly operated;

(c) During the period of the emergency the permittee took all reasonable steps to minimize levels of emissions that exceeded the emission standards, or other requirements in the permit; and

(d) The permittee submitted notice of the emergency to the permitting authority within two working days of the time when emission limitations were exceeded due to the emergency or shorter periods of time specified in an applicable requirement. This notice fulfills the requirement of WAC 173-401-615 (3)(b) unless the excess emissions represent a potential threat to human health or safety. This notice must contain a description of the emergency, any steps taken to mitigate emissions, and corrective actions taken.

(4) Burden of proof. In any enforcement proceeding, the permittee seeking to establish the occurrence of an emergency has the burden of proof.

(5) Relationship to other rules. This provision is in addition to any emergency or upset provision contained in any applicable requirement.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.94 RCW. WSR 93-20-075 (Order 91-68), § 173-401-645, filed 10/4/93, effective 11/4/93.]