

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
LOS ANGELES REGION**

**TIME SCHEDULE ORDER NO. R4-2023-0010-A01  
REQUIRING HERAEUS PRECIOUS METALS NORTH AMERICA LLC**

**TO COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS PRESCRIBED IN THE GENERAL PERMIT  
FOR STORM WATER DISCHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES  
AMENDED NOVEMBER 6, 2018 AND EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2020  
(ORDER WQ 2018-0028-DWQ, NPDES PERMIT NO. CAS000001)  
WDID NO. 4 19I015954**

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (Los Angeles Water Board) finds:

1. Heraeus Precious Metals North America LLC (HPM) owns and operates a facility located at 15524 Carmenita Road in Santa Fe Springs, California (Facility). This Facility encompasses a total area of 6.7 acres, and an industrial area of 4.3 acres.
2. The Facility is an industrial operation that is required to have coverage under the State's General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Industrial Activities, amended on November 6, 2018, and effective on July 1, 2020 (Amended General Permit). The Amended General Permit also serves as a permit under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System program, NPDES Permit No. CAS000001. HPM is a recycling facility that recovers and refines precious metals including gold, silver, platinum, palladium, rhodium, iridium, and ruthenium. HPM has a Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code of 3341-Secondary Smelting and Refining of nonferrous metals. This SIC code is listed as requiring permit coverage in Attachment A to the Amended General Permit.
3. The Amended General Permit establishes numeric effluent limitations (NELs) for facilities that discharge stormwater associated with industrial activities into water bodies that have certain approved Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and that have waste load allocations for industrial stormwater discharges as set forth in Attachment E to the Amended General Permit. The NELs are numerical limits, an exceedance of which is a violation of the Amended General Permit, and which require dischargers to limit the concentration of pollutants in their stormwater discharges to protect water quality.
4. Stormwater runoff from the Facility discharges to the North Fork of Coyote Creek, a tributary of the San Gabriel River.

5. The NELs that apply to industrial discharges from the Facility include total zinc, total copper, and total lead. These NELs are new and more stringent than the prior regulatory requirement in the previous General Permit. These NELs became effective on July 1, 2020, and exceedances of the NELs may result in mandatory minimum penalties pursuant to California Water Code (Water Code) section 13385, subdivisions (h) and (i).
6. HPM has completed a pollutant source assessment that addresses each of these pollutants and identified total zinc and total copper as associated with industrial activities at the Facility.
7. HPM is expected to exceed the NELs for total zinc and total copper based on the historical monitoring data reported to the State's online Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking System (SMARTS) database. The NELs and the corresponding concentrations of this pollutant in the discharge from the Facility has been reported to be:

Pollutant	Reported Concentration Range in mg/L	Numeric Effluent Limit in mg/L
Total zinc	0.36-1.9	0.158
Total copper	0.0022-0.349	0.027

8. HPM will require additional pollutant control measures to comply with the applicable NELs listed in the Amended General Permit.
9. HPM implements housekeeping Best Management Practices (BMPs) to maintain a clean and orderly facility to prevent potential pollutant sources from encountering stormwater. In addition to preventative maintenance, spill prevention, and an employee training program, HPM implements frequent coverage of outdoor materials, erosion control, as well as berms, drainage channels and physical structures that divert stormwater from bulk storage areas. HPM also applied a new protective coating on their galvanized fence and installed a carbon bed treatment system on discharge point S2.
10. HPM has installed, calibrated, and tested carbon bed treatment system treatment systems at discharge points S1 and S2. Stormwater that falls on the site is routed to the carbon bed treatment systems at the two discharge points where the stormwater will receive treatment prior to being discharged. This system was designed to treat the 85th percentile, 24-hour storm.
11. After testing the systems, HPM determined that improvements to the installed treatment systems are needed to comply with the NELs. HPM has installed additional ion exchange columns on each of the treatment systems at S1 and S2. HPM. Additional time is needed to test the performance of the treatment system,

calibrate the system, and evaluate the efficacy of the treatment system improvements over the next two (2) storm seasons. This additional time will allow HPM to analyze and assess whether additional improvements are necessary after the first storm season.

12. Per Water Code section 13385 subdivision (j)(3)(C)(iii)(I), if a time schedule exceeds one year from the effective date of the TSO, the schedule must include interim requirements that include effluent limitations for the pollutants of concern. Because this Order ends on June 30, 2024, consistent with Water Code section 13385, interim effluent limits are included for total zinc and total copper.
13. HPM has developed and updated a facility specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that is currently being implemented and complies with the monitoring and reporting requirements of the Amended General Permit. The facility specific SWPPP dated December 27, 2023, has been submitted electronically to the SMARTS database.
14. Water Code section 13300 states: “Whenever a regional board finds that a discharge of waste is taking place or threatening to take place that violates or will violate requirements prescribed by the regional board, or the state board, or that the waste collection, treatment, or disposal facilities of a discharger are approaching capacity, the board may require the discharger to submit for approval of the board, with such modifications as it may deem necessary, a detailed time schedule of specific actions the discharger shall take in order to correct or prevent a violation of requirements.”
15. Water Code section 13385, subdivisions (h) and (i) require the Los Angeles Water Board to impose mandatory minimum penalties when dischargers violate effluent limitations in NPDES permits. Water Code section 13385 subdivision (j)(3) allows the Los Angeles Water Board to exempt certain facilities from mandatory minimum penalties “when there are exceedances of NELs if the facility is in compliance with a time schedule order issued pursuant to Section 13300 if all of the [specified] requirements are met.”
16. Water Code section 13385, subdivision (j)(3)(B)(i) allows the Los Angeles Water Board to issue a Time Schedule Order (TSO) if the “regional board finds that... the discharger is not able to consistently comply with one or more of the effluent limitations established in the waste discharge requirements” if the “effluent limitation is a new, more stringent, or modified regulatory requirement that has become applicable to the waste discharge after the effective date of the waste discharge requirements and after July 1, 2000, new or modified control measures are necessary in order to comply with the effluent limitation, and the new or

modified control measures cannot be designed, installed, and put into operation within 30 calendar days.”

17. Prerequisites to issuing a TSO include those set forth in Water Code section 13385 subdivisions (j)(3)(C)(i), (j)(3)(C)(iii), and (j)(3)(D):

The TSO must establish “a time schedule for bringing the waste discharge into compliance with the effluent limitation that is as short as possible, taking into account the technological, operational, and economic factors that affect design, development and implementation of the control measures that are necessary to comply with the effluent limitation.” (Wat. Code § 13385, subd. (j)(3)(C)(i).) The TSO shall not exceed five years in length unless an extension is granted in accordance with Water Code section 13385, subdivision (j)(3)(C). If the time schedule exceeds one year from the effective date of the order, the schedule shall include interim requirements and the dates for their achievement. The interim requirements shall include both .... (I) Effluent limitations for the pollutant or pollutants of concern. (II) Actions and milestones leading to compliance with the effluent limitation. (Wat. Code § 13385, subd. (j)(3)(C)(iii).) The discharger must “[have] prepared and [be] implementing in a timely and proper manner or [be] required by the regional board to prepare and implement, a pollution prevention plan pursuant to section 13263.3.” (Wat. Code § 13385, subd. (j)(3)(D).)

18. The Los Angeles Water Board issues this Amended TSO with interim effluent limitations to HPM based on all the findings set forth herein.
19. The time schedule set forth herein ends on June 30, 2026. This date does not exceed 5 years from the effective date of TSO R4-2023-0010, January 23, 2023.
20. Pursuant to Water Code section 13385, subdivision (j)(3), full compliance with the requirements of this Amended TSO exempts HPM from mandatory minimum penalties (MMPs) only for violations of the NELs for total zinc and total copper that occur after the effective date of this Amended TSO until the expiration date of this Amended TSO. If an interim effluent limitation contained in this Amended TSO is exceeded, HPM may be subject to enforcement action. An exceedance of the interim effluent limitations for the purpose of this Amended TSO is defined as when two (2) or more analytical results from samples taken for any single parameter within a reporting year exceed the interim effluent limitation. In addition, if HPM does not implement its SWPPP or comply with the time schedule in this Order, HPM may be subject to enforcement action.
21. The issuance of this Amended TSO is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 15301 because the Amended TSO pertains to an

existing facility and involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use. In addition, the issuance of this Amended TSO is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, sections 15307, 15308, and 15321, subdivision (a)(2). The issuance of this Amended TSO is an action to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement and protection of the environment and a natural resource and is also an enforcement order issued by the Los Angeles Water Board.

22. All technical and monitoring reports required under this Amended TSO are required pursuant to Water Code section 13383. The Los Angeles Water Board needs the required information to determine compliance with this Amended TSO and the Amended General Permit.
23. Pursuant to Water Code section 13167.5, subdivision (a)(3), the Los Angeles Water Board has notified HPM, interested agencies, and interested persons of its intent to issue this Amended TSO concerning compliance with waste discharge requirements and provided a 30-day comment period. The Los Angeles Water Board considered all comments received.
24. Any person aggrieved by this action of the Los Angeles Water Board may petition the State Water Board to review the action in accordance with the Water Code section 13320 and the California Code of Regulations, Title 23, sections 2050 and following. The State Water Board must receive the petition by 5:00 p.m., 30 days after the Los Angeles Water Board action, except that if the thirtieth day following the action falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or state holiday, the petition must be received by the State Water Board by 5:00 p.m. on the next business day. Copies of the law and regulations applicable to filing petitions may be found online at [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public\\_notices/petitions/water\\_quality](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public_notices/petitions/water_quality) or will be provided upon request.

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that, pursuant to the Water Code sections 13300 and 13385, subdivision (j)(3), Heraeus Precious Metals North America LLC, (HPM), shall comply with the requirements listed below to ensure compliance with the NEL for total zinc and total copper contained in the Amended General Permit by June 30, 2026:

1. Comply immediately with the following interim actions, schedule, and interim effluent limitations at all discharge points:

Interim Action:	Schedule:
Implement a facility specific SWPPP	Throughout the span of enrollment in the Amended General Permit
Complete installation of ion exchange improvements to the treatment systems	August 31, 2024
Test, calibrate, and fine tune the treatment systems for the 2024-2025 reporting year	May 1, 2025
Assess efficacy and make adjustments and improvements as needed	September 1, 2025
Test, calibrate, and fine tune the treatment systems for the 2025-2026 reporting year	May 1, 2026

Pollutant	Interim Effluent Limitation in mg/L
Total zinc	0.68
Total copper	0.21

The foregoing interim effluent limitations and interim actions are in effect from **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**, through June 30, 2026. During this time, HPM shall comply with the interim actions and associated schedule as described in this Amended TSO.

2. Submit, electronically through the SMARTS database, biannual progress reports of efforts taken to comply with the interim actions per the above schedule and with the interim effluent limitations in addition to other reporting requirements pursuant to the Amended General Permit. The reports shall summarize the progress to date, the activities conducted during the reporting period, and the activities planned for the upcoming reporting period. Biannual progress reports shall be due June 1<sup>st</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup> each year throughout the duration of this Amended TSO, with the first report due on December 1, 2024.

3. Submit, electronically through the SMARTS database, a final report due on June 30, 2026 that describes a summary of all the interim actions completed and their successful completion.
4. Any person signing a document submitted under this Amended TSO shall make the following certification:  
  
“I certify under penalty of law that this document and all attachments were prepared under my direction or supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on my inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, accurate, and complete. I am aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for knowing violations.”
5. If HPM fails to comply with any provisions of this Amended TSO, the Los Angeles Water Board may take any further action authorized by law. The Executive Officer, or a delegee, is authorized to take appropriate administrative enforcement action pursuant, but not limited to, Water Code sections 13350 and 13385. The Los Angeles Water Board may also refer any violations to the Attorney General for judicial enforcement, including injunction and civil monetary remedies.
6. All other provisions of the Amended General Permit that are not in conflict with this Amended TSO, including NELs not addressed by this Amended TSO, remain in full force and effect.
7. The Los Angeles Water Board may reopen this Amended TSO at its discretion or at the request of HPM, if warranted. Lack of progress towards compliance with this Amended TSO may be cause for the Los Angeles Water Board to modify the conditions of this Amended TSO.
8. This Amended TSO is effective on **IMPLEMENTATION DATE** and expires on June 30, 2026.

SO ORDERED.

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**Susanna Arredondo, Executive Officer**

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**Date**