

Water Words

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Facilities plans:

Plans and studies related to the construction of treatment works necessary to comply with the *Clean Water Act*. A facilities plan investigates needs and provides information on the cost-effectiveness of alternatives, a recommended plan, an environmental assessment of the recommendations, and descriptions of the treatment works, costs, and a completion schedule.

Facultative bacteria:

Bacteria that can live under aerobic or anaerobic conditions.

Federal Insecticide, Fungicide & Rodenticide Act (FIFRA):

Law that regulates the sale and use of insecticides through U.S. EPA's registration process. The law directs EPA to restrict the use of pesticides to prevent unreasonable adverse effects on people and the environment taking into account the costs and benefits of various uses. The sale of any pesticide is prohibited unless it has gone through registration and is labeled to show the approved uses and restrictions.

Fen:

A type of wetland that accumulates peat deposits. Fens are less acidic than bogs, deriving most of their water from groundwater rich in calcium and magnesium. (See Wetlands)

Filling:

Depositing dirt, mud or other materials into aquatic areas to create more dry land, usually for agricultural or commercial development purposes, often with adverse ecological consequences. Filling activities may be subject to State and Regional Board regulation under state or federal law.

Filter strip:

Strip or area of vegetation used for removing sediment, organic matter, and other pollutants from runoff or wastewater.

Filtration:

A treatment process, under the control of qualified operators, for removing solid (particulate) matter from water by means of porous media such as sand or a man-made filter; often used to remove particles that contain pathogens.

Fish and Game, Department of (DFG):

State agency responsible for protecting fish and wildlife. Programs include investigations of toxic pollution problems, enforcement of fish and game pollution control laws. DFG also assists State and Regional Water Boards with monitoring programs.

Fix a sample:

A sample is "fixed" in the field by adding chemicals that prevent water quality indicators from changing before laboratory measurements are made.

Fixed-location monitoring:

Sampling a water body for pollutant concentration at one location continuously or repeatedly.

Flocculation:

Process by which clumps of solids in water or sewage aggregate through biological or chemical action so they can be separated out.

Floodplain:

The flat or nearly flat land along a river or stream or in a tidal area that is covered by water during a flood.

Flow rate:

The rate, expressed in gallons -or liters-per-hour, at which a fluid escapes from a hole or fissure in a tank. Such measurements are also made to describe the movement of liquid waste, effluent, and surface water movement.

Flowmeter:

A gauge indicating the velocity of wastewater moving through a treatment plant or of any liquid moving through a discrete conveyance.

Flume:

A natural or artificially made channel that diverts water.

Flush:

1. To open a cold-water tap to clear out all the water which may have been sitting for a long time in the pipes. In new homes, to flush a system means to send large volumes of water gushing through the unused pipes to remove loose particles of solder and flux; 2. to force large amounts of water through a system to clean out piping or tubing, and storage or process tanks.

Forebay:

A reservoir at the intake of a pumping plant or power plant to stabilize water levels; also a storage basin for regulating water for percolation into groundwater basins.

Freeboard:

The vertical distance between the lowest point along the top of a surface impoundment dike, berm, levee, treatment works or other similar feature and the surface of the liquid contained therein.

Freshwater:

Water that is free of excessive salinity concentration. Applicable salinity thresholds can be found in the California Toxics Rule, or in Basin Plans.

Furrow irrigation:

Irrigation method in which water travels through the field by means of small channels between each group of rows.