

# Water Words

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### **National Estuary Program:**

A program established under the Clean Water Act Amendments of 1987 to conserve and manage estuaries; restore and maintain their chemical, physical, and biological integrity; and control point and nonpoint pollution sources.

### **National Municipal Plan:**

A U. S. EPA policy created in 1984 to bring all publicly owned treatment works (POTWs) into compliance with Clean Water Act requirements.

### **National Oil and Hazardous Substances Contingency Plan (NOHSCP/NCP):**

The federal regulation that guides determination of the sites to be corrected under the Superfund program, and the program to prevent or control spills into surface waters or elsewhere.

### **National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES):**

A provision of the Clean Water Act that prohibits discharge of pollutants into waters of the United States unless a permit is issued that complies with the Clean Water Act. The State and Regional Boards issue WDRs that serve as NPDES permits in California.

### **National Priorities List (NPL):**

EPA's list of the most serious uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites identified for possible long-term remedial action under Superfund. The list is based primarily on the score a site receives from the Hazard Ranking System. EPA is required to update the NPL at least once a year. A site must be on the NPL to receive money for remedial action from the Superfund Trust Fund.

### **National Response Team (NRT):**

Representatives of 13 federal agencies that, as a team, coordinate federal responses to nationally significant incidents of pollution — an oil spill, a major chemical release, or a superfund response action — and provide advice and technical assistance to the responding agency(ies).

**National Response Center:**

The 24-hour a day federal operations center receives notifications of all releases of oil and hazardous substances into the environment. Operated by the U.S. Coast Guard, the Center evaluates all reports and notifies the appropriate agency.

**Nephelometric:**

Method of measuring turbidity in a water sample by passing light through the sample and measuring the amount of light deflected.

**Nitrate:**

A compound containing nitrogen that can exist in water as a dissolved gas. It can have harmful effects on humans and animals. Nitrates in water can cause severe illness in infants and domestic animals. A plant nutrient and inorganic fertilizer, nitrate is found in septic systems, animal feed lots, agricultural fertilizers, manure, industrial wastewaters, sanitary landfills, and garbage dumps.

**Non-Aqueous Phase Liquid (NAPL):**

Contaminants that remain undiluted as the original bulk liquid in the subsurface, e.g., spilled oil.

**Non-community water system:**

A public water system that is not a community water system; e.g., the water supply at a campsite or national park.

**Non-contact cooling water:**

Water used for cooling which does not come into direct contact with any raw material, product, byproduct, or waste.

**Non-degradation:**

An environmental policy that does not allow any lowering of naturally occurring water quality regardless of pre-established health standards.

**Non-hazardous solid waste:**

All putrescible and nonputrescible solid, semi-solid and liquid wastes, including garbage, trash, refuse, paper, rubbish, ashes, industrial wastes, demolition and construction wastes, abandoned vehicles and parts thereof, discarded home and industrial appliances, manure, vegetable or animal solid and semi-solid wastes and other discarded solid or semisolid waste, provided that such wastes do not contain wastes which must be managed as hazardous wastes, or wastes which contain soluble pollutants in concentrations which exceed applicable water quality objectives, or could cause degradation of waters of the state (See Designated waste).

**Non-potable:**

Water that is unsafe to drink because it contains pollutants, contaminants, minerals, or infective agents.

**Non-transient non-community water system:**

A public water system that regularly serves at least 25 of the same non-resident persons per day for more than six months per year.

**Nondischarging treatment plant:**

A treatment plant that does not discharge treated wastewater into any stream or river. Most are pond systems that dispose of the total flow they receive by means of evaporation or percolation to groundwater, or facilities that dispose of their effluent by recycling or reuse (e.g., spray irrigation or groundwater discharge).

**Nonpoint sources:**

Diffuse pollution sources that are not subject to NPDES permitting. The pollutants are generally carried off the land by runoff. Common non-point sources are agriculture, forestry, mining, dams, channels, and saltwater intrusion.

**Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program (NPS Program):**

In 1988, California became the first state to satisfy requirements of both the Clean Water Act (Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source) and the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990 (Coastal Nonpoint Source) through the NPS Program.

**NPDES Permits:**

The State and Regional Boards issue WDRs that serve as NPDES permits in California. NPDES permits are issued for up to five years and generally includes narrative or numeric effluent limitations to implement water quality standards. Monitoring and reporting programs are included. (See Waste discharge requirements, National Permit Discharge Elimination System)

**Nutrient:**

Any substance assimilated by living things that promotes growth. The term generally applies to nitrogen and phosphorus in wastewater, but also applies to other essential and trace elements.

**Nutrient pollution:**

Contamination of water resources by excessive inputs of nutrients. In surface waters, excess alga production is a major concern.