

GLOSSARY

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Aquatic Life – any indigenous species of plants or animals living in water.

Aquifer – an underground geological formation or group of formations containing usable amounts of groundwater that can supply wells and springs; an underground bed or stratum of sand, gravel, or rock that stores or conveys water below the surface of the soil.

Automotive Service Facilities – a facility that is categorized in any one of the following Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes: 5013, 5014, 5541, 5511, 7532-7534, or 7536-7539. For inspection purposes, Permittees need not inspect facilities with SIC codes 5013, 5014, 5541, 5511, provided that these facilities have no outside activities or materials that may be exposed to stormwater.

Bacteria – single-celled microorganisms that lack chlorophyll. Some bacteria are capable of causing human, animal or plant diseases; others are essential in pollution control because they break down organic matter in the air and in the water.

Best Management Practice (BMP) – any program, technology, process, siting criteria, operational methods or measures, or engineered systems, which when implemented prevent, control, remove, or reduce pollution.

Clean Water Act (CWA) – federal Water Pollution Control Act enacted in 1972 and amended by the Water Quality Act of 1987. The Clean Water Act prohibits the discharge of pollutants to waters of the United States unless the discharge is in accordance with an NPDES permit. The 1987 amendment requires that municipalities regulate industrial and construction stormwater discharges and those stemming from development.

Coliforms – any of a number of organisms common to the intestinal tract of animals, the presence in water of which is an indicator of pollution and of potentially dangerous bacterial contamination.

Commercial Development – any development that is not heavy industrial or residential. The category includes, but is not limited to: hospitals, laboratories and other medical facilities, educational institutions, recreational facilities, plant nurseries, multi-apartment buildings, car wash facilities, mini-malls and other business complexes, shopping malls, hotels, office buildings, public warehouses and other light industrial complexes.

Constructed Wetlands – an artificial wetland system designed to mitigate the impacts of urban runoff.

Control – to minimize, reduce, eliminate, or prohibit by technological, legal, contractual or other means, the discharge of pollutants from an activity or activities.

Designated Uses – those water uses identified in state water quality standards that must be achieved and maintained as required under the Clean Water Act. Uses can include cold water fisheries, public water supply, agriculture, etc.

Development – any construction, rehabilitation, redevelopment or reconstruction of any public or private residential project (whether single-family, multi-unit or planned unit development); industrial, commercial, retail and other non-residential projects, including public agency projects; or mass grading for future construction. It does not include routine maintenance to maintain original line and grade, hydraulic capacity, or original purpose of facility, nor does it include emergency construction activities required to immediately protect public health and safety.

Development Project – any application for approval for a project either submitted to the Department of Building and Safety or the City Planning Department. For the purposes of this handbook, a development project is further described in the Zoning Code Section under A project@ 21.20.3. B.17 and 12.40.C.5.

Discharge – the volume of water that passes through a given cross section of a channel or sewage outfall during a unit of time.

Discharging Directly – outflow from a drainage conveyance system that is composed entirely or predominantly of flows from the subject, property, development, subdivision, or industrial facility, and not commingled with the flows from adjacent lands.

Discretionary Project – a project which requires the exercise of judgment or deliberation when the public agency or public body decides to approve or disapprove a particular activity, as distinguished from situations where the public agency or body merely has to determine whether there has been conformity with applicable statutes, ordinances, or regulations.

Dissolved Oxygen (DO) – the amount of free (not chemically combined) oxygen in water; the concentration of oxygen held in solution in water, which is vital to fish and other aquatic organisms and for the prevention of odors. It is usually measured in mg/L or expressed as a percentage of the saturation value for a given water temperature and atmospheric pressure. In general, oxygen levels decline as pollution increases.

Dissolved Solids – the total amount of dissolved material, organic and inorganic, contained in water or wastes; excessive dissolved solids make water unpalatable for drinking and unsuitable for industrial uses.

Disturbed Area – an area that is altered as a result of clearing, grading, and/or excavation.

Effluent – a discharge of pollutants (usually in liquid form) into the environment, partially or completely treated or in its natural state; generally used in regard to discharges into waters; liquid flowing out of a system, such as a discharge of stormwater from an urban outfall, liquid waste from a factory, or water leaving a sewage treatment plant.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) – an area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which would be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments (California Public Resources Code § 30107.5). Areas subject to stormwater mitigation requirements are: areas designated as Significant Ecological Areas by the County of Los Angeles (*Los Angeles County Significant Areas Study, Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning (1976)* and amendments); an area designated as a Significant Natural Area by the California Department of Fish and Game’s Significant Natural Areas Program, provided that area has been field verified by the Department of Fish and Game; an area listed in the Basin Plan as supporting the “Rare, Threatened, or endangered Species (RARE)” beneficial use; and an area identified by a Permittee as environmentally sensitive.

Erosion – the wearing away of land surfaces by the action of wind or water.

Exempt Projects – development and redevelopment projects, which the Building Official determines, will not have a potential significant impact on stormwater quality.

Filtration – in stormwater treatment, a common process that removes particulate matter by separating water from solid material, usually by passing it through sand.

Good Housekeeping Practice – a common practice related to the storage, use, or cleanup of materials performed in a manner that minimizes the discharge of pollutants. Examples include cleaning up spills and leaks and storing materials in a manner that will contain any leaks and spills.

Hazardous Material – a material that is easily ignitable under ordinary temperature and pressure; readily supplies oxygen or reactive gas to a fire; is corrosive (highly acidic or caustic); is explosive or generates toxic gas; is acutely toxic to animals if it comes into contact with skin or is inhaled, eaten or drunk; or contains toxic chemicals that can be dissolved in an acidic environment, such as a landfill.

Heavy Metals – metals with high molecular weights that are of concern because they are generally toxic to animal life and health if naturally occurring concentrations are exceeded. Examples include arsenic, chromium, lead, and mercury.

High Vehicular Traffic Activity – 25,000 or greater average daily traffic [ADT] on main roadway or 15,000 or more ADT on any intersecting roadway.

Hillside – the property located in an area with known erosive soil conditions, where the development contemplates grading on any natural slope that is twenty-five percent or greater.

Impervious – a hard surface (such as a parking lot) which prevents or retards the entry of water into the soil, thus causing water to run off the surface in greater quantities and at an increased flow rate.

Industrial/Commercial Facility – any facility involved and/or used in the production, manufacture, storage, transportation, distribution, exchange or sale of goods and/or commodities, and any facility involved and/or used in providing professional and non-professional services. This category of facilities includes, but is not limited to, any facility defined by the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC). Facility ownership (federal, state, municipal, private) and profit motive of the facility are not factors in this definition.

Infiltration – the downward entry of water into the surface of the soil.

Legal Authority – defined as the ability to impose and enforce statutes, ordinances, and regulations to require control of pollutant sources and regulate the discharge of pollutants to the storm drain system, and to enter into interagency agreements, contracts, and memorandums of understanding. These powers are granted to the City of Los Angeles by the Constitution of the State of California and by individual constitution. These powers are promulgated by the City of Los Angeles through jurisdiction over the Los Angeles Basin.

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board – a governing board of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board state agency, which has jurisdiction over the Los Angeles Basin.

Maximum Extent Practicable (MEP) – standard for implementation of stormwater management programs to reduce pollutants in stormwater. MEP refers to stormwater management programs taken as a whole. It is the maximum extent possible taking into account equitable consideration and competing facts, including but not limited to: the gravity of the problem, public health risk, societal concern, environmental benefits, pollutant removal effectiveness, regulatory compliance, public acceptance, implement-ability, cost and technical feasibility. Section 402(p)(3)(B)(iii) of the Clean Water Act requires that municipal permits shall require controls to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including management practices, control techniques and systems, design and engineering methods, and such other provisions as the Administrator or the State determines appropriate for the control of such pollutants.

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) – conveyance or system of conveyances (including roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, man-made channels, or storm drains) owned or operated by a state, city, town, borough, county, parish, district, association, or other public body (created by or pursuant to state law) having jurisdiction over disposal of sewage, industrial wastes, stormwater, or other wastes, including special districts under state law such as a sewer district, flood control or drainage district, similar entity, an Indian tribe or an authorized Indian tribal organization, or a designated and approved management agency under Section 208 of the Clean Water Act that discharges to waters of the United States.

New Development – land disturbing activities; structural development, including construction or installation of a building or structure, creation of impervious surfaces; and land subdivision.

Non-point Source Pollution – water pollution caused by rainfall moving over and through ground which carries pollutants.

Non-structural BMP – a best management practice that does not require construction of a facility to control urban runoff.

NPDES – National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System initiated in 1972 by the amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (the Clean Water Act or CWA) to address the discharge of pollutants to navigable waters from point sources unless the discharge is authorized by an NPDES permit. The Water Quality Act of 1987 added section 402(p) to the CWA establishing phased and tiered requirements for stormwater discharge under the NPDES program. This manual serves to assist in meeting the requirements of the NPDES Permit.

Organic – referring to or derived from living organisms; in chemistry, any compound containing carbon.

Organism – any living plant or animal; a living body made up of cells, tissues and organs.

Pathogen – disease caused by organisms.

Point Source – pollution arising from a well-defined origin, such as a discharge from an industrial plant.

Pollutant – any introduced gas, liquid, or solid that makes a resource unfit for a specific purpose. Pollutant is the substance that pollutes air, water or land. They are defined in Section (502) of the federal Clean Water Act (3' U.S.C. ' 1362(6)), or are incorporated into the California Water Code ' 13373. Specifically, pollutants that are carried by runoff from rainstorms or other watering activities. Examples of pollutants include but are not limited to the following:

- Commercial and industrial waste (such as fuels, solvents, detergents, plastic pellets, hazardous substances, fertilizers, pesticides, slag, ash, and sludge);
- Metals such as cadmium, lead, zinc, copper, silver, nickel, and chromium; and non-metals such as phosphorus and arsenic;
- Petroleum hydrocarbons (such as fuels, lubricants, surfactants, waste oils, solvents, coolants, and grease);
- Excessive eroded soils, sediment, and particulate materials in amounts which may adversely affect the beneficial use of the receiving waters, flora, or fauna;
- Animal wastes (such as discharge from confinement facilities, kennels, pens, recreational facilities, stables, and show facilities);
- Substances having characteristics such as pH less than 6 or greater than 9, unusual coloration or turbidity, excessive levels of fecal coliform, fecal streptococcus, or enterococcus.

Pollutant Loading – the quantity of a pollutant found in stormwater and/or urban runoff expressed in mass per unit of time. Pollutants loading are commonly expressed in units of tons/year or pounds/year.

Pollution Prevention – eliminating or reducing at the source the use, generation, or release of toxic pollutants, hazardous substances, and hazardous wastes.

Priority Projects – development and redevelopment projects requiring discretionary approval and which the Building Official determines may have a potential significant effect on stormwater quality based on seven designated categories under the Stormwater NPDES Permit for Los Angeles County.

Receiving Water – rivers, lakes, oceans, or other bodies that receive runoff.

Redevelopment – land-disturbing activity that results in the creation, addition, or replacement of 5,000 square feet or more of impervious surface area on an already developed. Where redevelopment results in an alteration to more than fifty percent of impervious surfaces of previously existing development stormwater quality control requirements, the entire project must be mitigated. Where redevelopment results in an alteration to less than fifty percent of impervious surfaces or a previously existing development, and the existing development was not subject to post development stormwater quality control requirements, only the alteration must be mitigated, and not the entire development. Redevelopment does not include routine maintenance activities that are conducted to maintain original line and grade, hydraulic capacity, original purpose of facility, or emergency redevelopment activity required to protect public health and safety. Existing single family structures are exempt from the redevelopment requirements.

Runoff – the portion of rainfall or irrigation water and other watering activities also known as dry-weather flows that flow across the ground surface and eventually to receiving waters. Runoff can pick up pollutants from the air or the land and carry them to receiving waters.

San Fernando Valley/Upper Los Angeles River Area (ULARA) Watershed – that area bounded peripherally by the water divide which when drained feeds into the Los Angeles River.

Santa Monica Bay Watershed – that area bounded peripherally by the water divide which when drained feeds into Santa Monica Bay.

Sedimentation – in stormwater treatment, the settling out of solids by gravity; the addition of soils to lakes, a part of the natural aging process, making lakes shallower. The process can be greatly accelerated by human activities.

Source Control BMP – any schedules of activities, prohibitions of practices, maintenance procedures, managerial practices or operational practices that aim to prevent stormwater pollution by reducing the potential for contamination at the source of pollution.

Storm Drain System – any pipe or conduit used to collect and carry away stormwater runoff from the generating source to receiving streams. A sewer that conveys household and commercial sewage is called a sanitary sewer. A storm drain transports runoff from rain or snow. While stormwater runoff and sewage can be transported in the same system or combined sewers, they are separate in the City of Los Angeles.

Storm Event –a rainfall event that produces more than 0.1 inch of precipitation and that, which is separated from the previous storm event by at least 72 hours of dry weather.

Stormwater – water which originates from atmospheric moisture (rainfall or snowmelt) and falls onto land, water, or other surfaces.

Structural BMP –any structural facility designated and constructed to mitigate the adverse impact of urban runoff pollution (e.g. canopy, structural enclosure). The category may include both Treatment Control BMPs and Source Control BMPs.

Surface Water – water on the earth's surface exposed to the atmosphere such as rivers, lakes, streams, and the oceans.

SUSMP – The Los Angeles Countywide Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan. The SUSMP shall address conditions and requirements of new development.

Suspended Solids – small particles that hang suspended in the water column and create turbid, or cloudy, conditions.

Toxicity – the quality or degree of being poisonous or harmful to plant or animal life.

Treatment – the application of engineered systems that use physical, chemical, or biological processes to remove pollutants. Such processes include, but are not limited to, filtration, gravity settling, media adsorption, biodegradation, biological uptake, chemical oxidation and UV radiation.

Treatment Control BMP – any engineered system designed to remove pollutants by simple gravity settling of particulate pollutants, filtration, biological uptake, media adsorption or any other physical, biological, or chemical process.

Urban Runoff – stormwater from city streets and gutters that usually contains a great deal of litter and organic and bacterial wastes.

USEPA – United States Environmental Protection Agency, the federal agency that enforces federal regulations and administers federal programs such as the NPDES program. These regulations require the discharges from defined municipal separate storm drain systems, industrial facilities, and construction activities to comply with the NPDES permit conditions intended to reduce or eliminate the discharge of pollutants from stormwater drainage

systems. In California, the USEPA has delegated its authority to issue NPDES permits to the State Water Resource Control Board and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards.

Water Pollution – the addition of sewage, industrial wastes, or other harmful or objectionable material to water in sufficient quantities or concentrations to result in measurable degradation of water quality.

Water Quality Criteria – the levels of pollutants that affect the suitability of water for a given use. Generally, water use classifications include public water supply, recreation, propagation of fish and other aquatic life, agricultural use, and industrial use.

Water Quality Standard – acceptable limits on water quality parameters--those criteria set by the State of California, for instance, with review by the EPA, so that when enforced they will meet the goals of the Clean Water Act.

Watershed – area drained by a given stream; an area bounded peripherally by a water divide and draining to a particular watercourse or body of water. Topography is the primary determinant of watershed boundaries.

Wetlands – swamps or marshes, especially areas preserved for wildlife. Wetlands are crucial wildlife habitats and are important for flood control and maintaining the health of surrounding ecosystems.

Wet Pond – pond for urban runoff management that is designed to detain urban runoff and always contain water.

