

Appendix M

Glossary

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Adverse Impact

means a detrimental effect upon water quality or beneficial uses caused by a discharge or loading of a pollutant or pollutants.

Aquatic Life

any indigenous species of plants or animals living in water.

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.

Base Flow

the stream discharge composed of groundwater drainage and delayed surface drainage

Best Management Practice (BMP)

a practice or combination of practices determined to be the best known or most practicable means of preventing or reducing, to a level compatible with water quality goals, the amount of pollution generated by nonpoint sources.

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 storm water 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

means any development on private land 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, 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.

Construction

means constructing, clearing, grading or excavation that results in soil disturbance. Construction includes structure teardown. It does not include routine maintenance to maintain original line and grade, hydraulic capacity, or original purpose of facility; emergency construction activities required to immediately protect public health and safety; interior remodeling with no outside exposure of construction material or construction waste to storm water; mechanical permit work; or sign permit work.

Contact Recreation

recreational activities involving significant risks of ingestion of water, including wading by children, swimming, water skiing, diving, and surfing.

Control

means 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 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 “project” 21.20.3.B.7 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.

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 storm water from an urban outfall, liquid waste from a factory, or water leaving a sewage treatment plant.

Erosion

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

Filtration

in storm water 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.

Ground Cover

grasses or other plants grown to keep soil from being blown or washed away.

Hazardous Waste

A waste, or combination of wastes, which because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics may either:

- (a) cause, or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious irreversible or incapacitating reversible illness; or
- (b) Pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, or disposed of, or otherwise managed.

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.

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.

Infiltration

the flow of a fluid into a substance through pores or small openings, commonly used in hydrology to denote the flow of water into soil material.

Intermittent Stream

a stream that flows only part of the time. Flow generally occurs for several weeks or months in response to seasonal precipitation due to groundwater discharge in contrast to an ephemeral stream, which flows but a few hours or days following a single storm.

Legal Authority

“Legal authority” is 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 that has jurisdiction over the Los Angeles Basin.

Major Outfall

a municipal separate storm drain outfall that receives storm water and urban runoff from contributing municipal storm drains and discharges from a single pipe.

Maximum Extent Practicable (MEP)

“Maximum extent practicable” is the standard for implementation of storm water management programs to reduce pollutants in storm water. MEP refers to storm water 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, implementability, 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)

a 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, storm water, 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.

Noncontact Recreation

recreational pursuits not involving a significant risk of water ingestion, including fishing, commercial and recreational boating, and limited body contact incidental to shoreline activity.

Nonpoint Source Pollution

water pollution caused by rainfall moving over and through ground that carries pollutants.

Nonstructural Control

a 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 storm water 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.

Outfall

the mouth of a sewer, drain, or conduit where effluent is discharged into a receiving water.

Pathogen

disease-causing organisms.

Perennial Stream

a stream that normally has water in its channel at all times.

Phosphorous

an element that while essential to life, contributes to the eutrophication of lakes and other bodies of water.

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. A substance that pollutes air, water or land. They are defined in Section (502) of the federal Clean Water Act (33 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 Coliforms, fecal streptococcus, or enterococcus.

Pollutant Loading

the quantity of a pollutant found in storm water and/or urban runoff expressed in mass per unit of time. Pollutant loadings are commonly expressed in units of tons/year or pounds/year.

Pollution Prevention

Pollution prevention is the use of materials, processes, or practices that reduce or eliminate the creation of pollutants or wastes at the source. It includes practices that reduce the use of hazardous materials, energy, water, or other resources and practices that protect natural resources through conservation or more efficient uses.

Receiving Water

rivers, lakes, oceans, or other bodies that receive runoff.

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.

Santa Monica Bay Watershed

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

Sedimentation

in storm water 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.

Storm Drain System

any pipe or conduit used to collect and carry away storm water 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 storm water runoff and sewage can be transported in the same system or combined sewers, they are separate in the City of Los Angeles.

Storm Water

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

Structural Control

a practice that involves design and construction of a facility to mitigate the adverse impact of urban runoff. The structures often require maintenance.

Surface Water

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

Suspended Solids

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

Urban Runoff

storm water from city streets and gutters that usually contains a great deal of litter and organic and bacterial wastes.

Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan

a plan to be submitted to the City of Los Angeles prior to the submittal of an application for the planning or building approval of a development project, that sets forth storm water pollution controls to be incorporated into development projects. The plan shall be designed to reduce the runoff volume from the site and the pollutant load contributed by the site through incorporation of design elements and practices that address each of the following goals:

- Maximize, to the extent practicable, the percentage of permeable surfaces in order to allow more percolation
- Minimize, to the extent practicable, the amount of runoff directed to impermeable areas and to the storm drain system
- Maximize to the extent practicable, storm water filtration and storage for reuse through the use of sediment traps, cisterns or other means
- Minimize, to the extent practicable, parking lot pollution through the use of porous materials to allow percolation of storm water through the installation of appropriate treatment controls or through other means

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 storm water 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

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

Wetland

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.