



Water Quality Parameters

Alkalinity

The buffering capacity of water (i.e., reduce a pH change) with the addition of an acid.

Ammonia

May speed the process of eutrophication in waterways and can be harmful to fish.

Hardness

Measure of cations dissolved in water, primarily calcium and magnesium.

Nitrate & Nitrite

Inorganic nitrogen is formed from oxidation of ammonia by bacteria. It is an important nutrients for plants.

Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen

Concentration of organic nitrogen and ammonia. Common sources include fertilizers and septic leaks.

Total Phosphorus

Often the limiting nutrient in water bodies. Common sources include fertilizers, cleaners, and wastewater.

Turbidity

Indicator used to measure water clarity. Influenced by algal concentrations and suspended sediment.

Dissolved Oxygen

Amount of oxygen dissolved in water, used by all aquatic organisms. Low levels can be a pollution indicator.

Specific Conductivity

Measure of water's ability to conduct an electrical current. Related to the amount of ions in solution.

Potential Hydrogen Ion Concentration (pH)

Metric used to measure how acidic or basic a solution is.

Chloride

Indicator of salinity. Major sources include road salts, salt wells, and water softeners.

Chlorophyll a

Indicator of algal biomass. As algal biomass increases over certain thresholds, water quality can decrease.

Fish/Macroinvertebrates

Biological indicator of water quality, incorporating diversity, pollution tolerance, and temperature threshold.