

GLOSSARY

A

Automatic Stormwater Diversion System

A system that collects, measures, signals then diverts Stormwater. Diversion can be accomplished in many ways including, automatic valves and pumps.

Automatic Rainwater Diversion System

A system that collects, measures, signals then diverts Stormwater. Diversion can be accomplished in many ways including, automatic valves and pumps.

Actuator

Electrical device used to automatically open/close a valve.

B

Baseline general permit

The first general permitting option available to regulated industrial facilities and large construction activities. EPA issued the construction baseline general permit on 9/9/92 (57 FR 41176) and the industrial baseline general permit on 9/25/92 (57 FR 44412). The construction baseline general permit has been replaced by the Construction General Permit, issued on 2/17/98 (63 FR 7857). The industrial baseline general permit has largely been replaced by the Multi-Sector General Permit, issued on 9/25/95 (60 FR 50804).

BAT

Best available technology economically achievable (applies to non-conventional and toxic pollutants)

BCT

Best conventional pollutant control technology (applies to conventional pollutants)

Best available technology/Best control technology

A level of technology based on the very best (state-of-the-art) control and treatment measures that have been developed or are capable of being developed and that are economically achievable within the appropriate industrial category

Best management practices

Activities or structural improvements that help reduce the quantity and improve the quality of stormwater runoff. BMPs include treatment requirements, operating procedures, and practices to control site runoff, spillage or leaks, sludge or waste disposal, or drainage from raw material storage.

Biofilter

Dense vegetation designed to filter stormwater runoff as it passes through

BMP

Best management practice

Buffer strip or buffer zone

Strip of grass or other erosion-resistant vegetation located between a waterway and an area of more intensive land use

C

Catch basin

An entryway to the storm drain system, usually located at a street corner

Category (XI) facilities

Specific facilities classified as light industry with equipment or materials exposed to stormwater

CFR

Code of Federal Regulations

Clean Water Act

Legislation that provides statutory authority for the NPDES program; Public law 92-500; 33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq. Also known as the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.

Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments (CZARA)

The Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program (Section 6217) addresses nonpoint pollution problems in coastal waters. Section 6217 requires the 29 states and territories with approved Coastal Zone Management Programs to develop Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Programs. In its program, a state or territory describes how it will implement nonpoint source pollution controls, known as management measures, that conform with those described in Guidance Specifying Management Measures for Sources of Nonpoint Pollution in Coastal Waters (available at <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/MMGI/>). This program is administered jointly with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Code of Federal Regulations

The compilation of federal regulations. Each area of regulation is contained in a separate volume (e.g., environmental regulations are compiled in volume 40, or 40 CFR). Each volume contains up to several hundred parts.

Conduit

Any channel or pipe used to transport flowing water

Contactors

Contactors, starters, motor controllers all do the same thing: turn power on or off. Typically that means they apply the full power instantaneously (full voltage starters, across the line starters). Typically use to protect controllers and other electronic instrumentation

Conveyance

The process of water moving from one place to another

CSO

Combined sewer overflow

Culvert

A short, closed (covered) conduit that passes stormwater runoff under an embankment, usually a roadway. A rectangular or square concrete culvert is referred to as a box culvert.

D

Detention

A stormwater system that delays the downstream progress of stormwater runoff in a controlled manner, typically by using temporary storage areas and a metered outlet device

Dike

Also levee; an embankment used to confine or control water. Dikes are often built along the banks of a river to prevent overflow.

Discharge

The volume of water (and suspended sediment if surface water) that passes a given location within a given period of time

Drain inlet insert

A device (tray, bag, or basket) installed in a drain inlet or catch basin to treat stormwater runoff

E

Erosion

Removal of soil particles by wind and water. Often the eroded debris (silt or sediment) becomes a pollutant via stormwater runoff. Erosion occurs naturally but can be intensified by human activities such as farming, development, road-building, and timber harvesting.

Excavation

The process of removing earth, stone, or other materials from land

F

Flood

A temporary rise in flow or stage of any watercourse or stormwater conveyance system that results in stormwater runoff exceeding its normal flow boundaries and inundating adjacent, normally dry areas

Flood control

The specific regulations and practices that reduce or prevent the damage caused by stormwater runoff

G

General permit

A permit issued under the NPDES program to cover a certain class or category of stormwater discharges. These permits reduce the administrative burden of permitting stormwater discharges.

Grading

The cutting and/or filling of the land surface to a desired slope or elevation

H

Holding pond

A pond or reservoir, usually made of earth, built to store polluted runoff for a limited time

I

Illicit connection

Any discharge to a municipal separate storm sewer that is not composed entirely of stormwater and is not authorized by an NPDES permit, with some exceptions (e.g., discharges due to fire-fighting activities)

IECA

International Erosion Control Association
Impermeable material

A soil or material whose properties prevent movement of water through the material
Impervious surface

Hard ground cover that prevents or retards the entry of water into the soil and increases runoff, such as asphalt, concrete, rooftops
Industrial activity

Any activity directly related to manufacturing, processing, or raw materials storage areas at an industrial plant

Infiltration

The portion of rainfall or surface runoff that moves downward into the subsurface rock and soil

L

Large municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4)

An MS4 located in an incorporated place or county with a population of 250,000 or more, as determined by the 1990 U.S. Census

Light manufacturing facilities

Described under Category (XI) of the definition of "stormwater discharges associated with industrial activity" [40 CFR 122.26(b)(14)(XI)]. Under the Phase I NPDES program, these facilities were eligible for exemption from stormwater permitting requirements if certain areas and activities were not exposed to stormwater. As a result of the Phase II Final Rule, these facilities must now certify to a condition of no exposure.

M

Maximum extent practicable (MEP)

A standard for water quality that applies to all MS4 operators regulated under the NPDES program. Since no precise definition of MEP exists, it allows for maximum flexibility on the part of MS4 operators as they develop and implement their programs.

Media filter

A filter containing sand, compost, sand peat, or perlite and zeolite designed to filter constituents (particulates, oil, bacteria, or dissolved metals) out of stormwater runoff as it passes through the filter

Medium municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4)

MS4 located in an incorporated place or county with a population of 100,000 or more but less than 250,000, as determined by the 1990 U.S. Census

MEP

Maximum extent practicable

Motor controllers

Contactors, starters, motor controllers all do the same thing: turn power on or off. Typically that means they apply the full power instantaneously (full voltage starters, across the line starters). Typically use to protect controllers and other electronic instrumentation

MS4

Municipal separate storm sewer system
Municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4)

A publicly owned conveyance or system of conveyances that discharges to waters of the US and is designed or used for collecting or conveying stormwater, is not a combined sewer, and is not part of a publicly owned treatment works (POTW)

Multisector general permit (MSGP)

An NPDES permit that regulates stormwater discharges from 11 categories of industrial activities

N

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

Two-phased surface water quality program authorized by Congress as part of the 1987 Clean Water Act

"No exposure"

Protection of all industrial materials or activities by a storm-resistant shelter to prevent exposure to rain, snow, snowmelt, and/or runoff.

Non-delegated state

Any state that does not have the authority to implement the NPDES stormwater program

Nonpoint-source pollutants

Pollutants from many diffuse sources. Nonpoint-source pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, finally depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters, and even underground sources of drinking water.

Notice of Intent (NOI)

An application to notify the permitting authority of a facility's intention to be covered by a general permit; exempts a facility from having to submit an individual or group application

NPDES

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, the two-phased surface water quality program authorized by Congress as part of the 1987 Clean Water Act

O

Outfall

The point where wastewater or drainage discharges from a sewer pipe, ditch, or other conveyance to a receiving body of water

P

Permitting authority

The NPDES-authorized state agency or EPA regional office that administers the NPDES program, issuing permits, providing compliance assistance, conducting inspections, and enforcing the program

Physically interconnected MS4

One MS4 connected to a second MS4 in such a way that allows direct discharges into the second system

Point-source pollutants

Pollutants from a single, identifiable source such as a factory or refinery; also called single-point-source pollution

Pollutant loading

The total quantity of pollutants in stormwater runoff

Pump

A device that raises, transfers, or compresses fluids or that attenuates gases especially by suction or pressure or both

R

Rainwater Diversion System

A system that collects, measures, signals then diverts Rainwater. Diversion can be accomplished in many ways including, automatic valves and pumps.

Rainwater switch

Device used to collect, measure and then signal when a specified amount amount of Stormwater has fallen.

Regulated MS4

Any MS4 covered by the NPDES program (regulated small, medium, or large MS4s)

Retrofit

The modification of stormwater management systems through the construction and/or enhancement of wet ponds, wetland plantings, or other BMPs designed to improve water quality

Runoff

Drainage or flood discharge that leaves an area as surface flow or as pipeline flow

S

Sanitary sewer

A system of underground pipes that carries sanitary waste or process wastewater to a treatment plant

Section 319 grant

A grant, under section 319 of the Clean Water Act, that pays up to 60% of the cost of a project to prevent or control nonpoint source pollution

Sediment

Soil, sand, and minerals washed from land into water, usually after rain. Sediment can destroy fish-nesting areas, clog animal habitats, and cloud waters so that sunlight does not reach aquatic plants.

Sheet flow

The portion of precipitation that moves initially as overland flow in very shallow depths before eventually reaching a stream channel

Site runoff

Any drainage or flood discharge that is released from a specified area

Small municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4)

Any MS4 that is not regulated under Phase I of the NPDES program

Starter

Contactors, starters, motor controllers all do the same thing: turn power on or off. Typically that means they apply the full power instantaneously (full voltage starters, across the line starters). Typically use to protect controllers and other electronic instrumentation.

State revolving fund loan

Low-interest loan to pay for infrastructure investments such as wastewater treatment facilities, landfill closures, and habitat restoration. Federal and state funding provide the seed money, and repayment of earlier loans keeps the system going.

Storm drain

An opening leading to an underground pipe or open ditch for carrying surface runoff, separate from the sanitary sewer or wastewater system
Storm surge

An increase in water level above the normal water level on the open coast due to the action of wind stress and atmospheric pressure on the sea surface
Stormwater

Precipitation that accumulates in natural and/or constructed storage and stormwater systems during and immediately following a storm event

Stormwater Diversion System

A system that collects, measures, signals then diverts Stormwater. Diversion can be accomplished in many ways including, automatic valves and pumps.

Stormwater switch

Device used to collect, measure and then signal when a specified amount amount of Stormwater has fallen.

Stormwater management

Functions associated with planning, designing, constructing, maintaining, financing, and regulating the facilities (both constructed and natural) that collect, store, control, and/or convey stormwater

Stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP)

A plan to describe a process though which a facility thoroughly evaluates potential pollutant sources at a site and selects and implements appropriate measures designed to prevent or control the discharge of pollutants in stormwater runoff

Stormwater utility

Special assessment district set up to generate a stable source of funding for stormwater management within a region, usually through user fees

Surface runoff

The portion of rainfall that moves over the ground toward a lower elevation and does not infiltrate the soil

Surface water

Water that remains on the surface of the ground, including rivers, lakes, reservoirs, streams, wetlands, impoundments, seas, and estuaries

SWMP

Stormwater management plan (or program)

T

Total maximum daily load (TMDL)

The maximum allowable loading of a pollutant that a designated water body can assimilate and still meet numeric and narrative water quality standards. TMDLs were established by the 1972 Clean Water Act. Section 303(d) of the US Water Quality Act requires states to identify water bodies that do not meet federal water quality standards. In 1996 the states developed (with EPA approval) a list of water bodies that failed to meet section 303(d) standards. These are the focus of TMDLs. Allocation of named pollutants is on percentage basis.

Tool box

A term to describe the activities and materials that EPA plans to perform/produce to facilitate implementation of the stormwater program in an effective and cost-efficient manner. The eight components include fact sheets, guidance documents, menu of BMPs, compliance assistance, information clearinghouse, training and outreach efforts, technical research, and support for demonstration projects.

U

Urbanized area

A Bureau of the Census determination of a central place (or places) and the adjacent densely settled surrounding territory that together have a minimum residential population of 50,000 people and a minimum average density of 1,000 people/mi.2

Urban runoff

Stormwater from urban areas, which tends to contain heavy concentrations of pollutants from urban activities

V

Valve

Any of numerous mechanical devices by which the flow of liquid, gas, or loose material in bulk may be started, stopped, or regulated by a movable part that opens, shuts, or partially obstructs one or more ports or passageways

BALL VALVE - a valve in which a ball regulates the aperture by its rise and fall due to fluid pressure, a spring, or its own weight

BUTTERFLY VALVE - a damper or valve in a pipe consisting of a disk turning on a diametral axis

CHECK VALVE - a valve that permits flow in one direction only

W

Watershed

Geographical area that drains to a specified point on a water course, usually a confluence of streams or rivers. Also known as drainage area, catchment, or river basin. (In the UK the term "watershed" refers to what in the US is called the drainage divide, and the term "catchment" refers to what in the US is called a watershed.)

Wet weather flows

Water entering storm drains during rainstorms/wet weather events