

Drinking Water Treatment Terms

The **Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA)**: A federal law that regulates tap water. Under SDWA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets standards for drinking water quality and oversees the states, cities, and water suppliers who treat and provide the water to consumers.

Water Supplier: Someone who owns or operates a public water system.

Surface Water: Water that has collected on the ground, or a river, stream, lake, sea or ocean.

Contaminant: Anything that makes water (or another substance) impure and unfit for consumption or use.

Coagulant: A substance that causes fine particles to stick together so that they can more easily be removed by filters.

Ground Water: Water that comes from underground.

Disinfection: A process that removes disease-causing organisms such as viruses and bacteria.

Source Water: The supply of water for a water utility that is usually treated before getting to consumers

Wastewater Treatment Terms

Clean Water Act: A federal law that regulates water pollution. It governs what happens to America's rivers, lakes, streams, and wetlands.

Wastewater: Water that has been used in homes, industries, and businesses that should not be reused unless treated by a wastewater facility.

Suspended Solids: Small particles that float on the surface of or are suspended in sewage.

Storm Runoff/Storm Water: Unfiltered water that reaches rivers, lakes, and oceans by flowing across impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots, driveways, and roofs after precipitation.

Sanitary Sewer: A sewer designed to carry residential sewage (and no storm water).

Pollutant: A waste material that contaminates water and makes it unfit for use.

Microorganism: An extremely small organism that can only be seen with a microscope.