

Glossary

Effluent — Liquid flowing out of a system, such as a discharge of liquid waste from a factory or water leaving a sewage treatment plant.

Eutrophic lake — A nutrient-rich lake — usually shallow, "green" and with limited oxygen in the bottom layer of water.

Feedlot — A lot or building or a group of lots or buildings used for the confined feeding, breeding or holding of animals. This definition includes areas specifically designed for confinement in which manure may accumulate or any area where the concentration of animals is such that a vegetative cover cannot be maintained. Lots used to feed and raise poultry are considered to be feedlots. Pastures are not animal feedlots.

Groundwater — Underground water in an aquifer, used for drinking water in 75 percent of Minnesota households. The subsurface water supply in the saturated zone below the level of the water table.

Maximum contaminant level — The legal threshold limit on the amount of a hazardous substance that is allowed in drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The limit, set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, is usually expressed as a concentration in milligrams or micrograms per litre of water.

Mercury — Mercury is a highly toxic element that is found both naturally and as an introduced contaminant in the environment. Although concentrations in water are very low, mercury accumulates through the aquatic food chain, resulting in high concentrations in fish that can threaten the health of people and wildlife. It is measured in units of nanograms per liter (ng/L) in water and milligrams per kilogram (mg/Kg) in fish.

