

# Glossary

**Activated sludge:** Sludge clumps produced in an aeration tank by the growth of organisms in the presence of dissolved oxygen.

**Aerated pond:** A wastewater treatment pond in which oxygen is incorporated into the wastewater through mechanical or diffused-air aeration equipment.

**Aerobic:** Aquatic life or chemical processes that require the presence of oxygen.

**Algal bloom:** An unusual or excessive abundance of algae.

**Alkalinity:** Capacity of a substance to neutralize acid (having a pH above 7.0).

**Alternative technology:** Wastewater treatment systems that are new or different from the standard systems defined in codes and those typically used in a certain area.

**Anoxic:** Describes a water column or lake with absence of oxygen and presence of nitrate, such as at the bottom of a eutrophic lake in the summer or under the ice in the winter

**Benthic:** The bottom zone of a lake, or bottom-dwelling life forms.

**Best Management Practice:** A practice determined by a state agency or other reliable authority to be the most effective, practicable means of preventing or reducing pollution.

**Bio-accumulation:** Build-up of toxic substances in the flesh of fish or other living organisms. Toxic effects may be passed on to other animals or humans eating the fish.

**Biological aerobic organisms:** Living organisms that break down organic solids in the presence of oxygen into inorganic and stable organic solids.

**Biological oxygen demand (BOD):** The amount of oxygen required by aerobic microorganisms to decompose the organic matter dissolved or suspended in water. Used as a measure of the degree of water contamination.

**Centralized wastewater treatment system:** A wastewater treatment system in which the wastewater is collected from many homes and treated at a single facility and nearly always discharged to a surface water body.

**Certificate of compliance:** A document reporting the results of an inspection of a system to determine its compliance or noncompliance with applicable requirements in force at the time of the inspection.

**Chlorination:** The application of chlorine to water or wastewater for the purpose of disinfection, oxidation, odor control or other desired effects.

**Clarifier:** A settling tank, sedimentation tank or basin in which wastewater is held for a period of time to allow the heavy solids to settle to the bottom and the lighter solids to float to the surface.

**Class C wastewater treatment operator:** An operator licensed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to manage and operate a municipal wastewater treatment plant under the terms and licensure of a Class C level license.

**Clean Water Partnership (CWP) Program:** A program created by the legislature in 1990 to protect and improve groundwater and surface water in Minnesota by providing financial and technical assistance to local units of government interested in controlling nonpoint source pollution. Funding comes through the 319 Federal Clean Water Partnership funding program.

**Combination wastewater system:** (Also referred to as **dual** or **separation technology** or **treatment train**.) A wastewater treatment system that uses more than one technology to treat the wastewater. Frequently one of the technologies is a composting or incinerating toilet and the other is a septic tank/drainfield or an aerobic tank with a soil treatment and dispersal unit used for the balance of the wastewater.

**Comminutors:** Devices such as grinders, cutters and shredders used to reduce the size of solids found in wastewater.

**Compliance inspection:** An evaluation, investigation, inspection or other such process to determine if a treatment system meets all of the applicable local and state requirements, which usually results in a certificate of compliance or a notice of noncompliance being issued.

**Compliant septic system:** An individual or multiple household wastewater treatment system that meets all applicable local ordinances, state statutes and Minnesota Chapter 7080 rules.