

## FACT SHEET

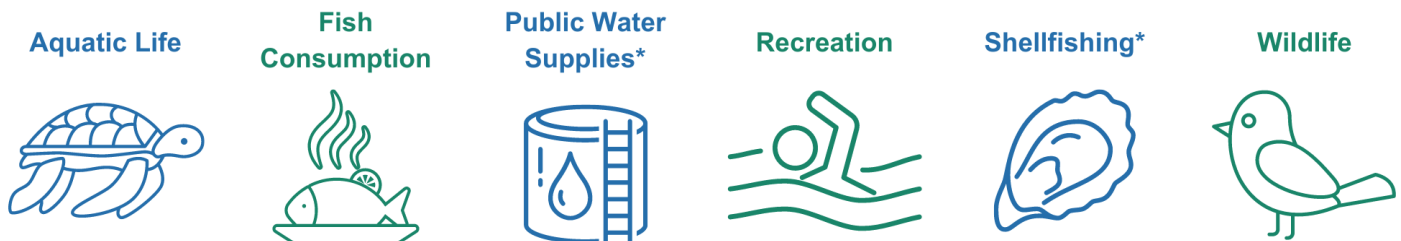
### Water Quality Standards & Monitoring

#### Overview

DEQ protects water quality in the Commonwealth and works to minimize impacts by issuing permits limiting discharge to water and manage stormwater runoff, and prevent erosion, flooding and contaminants from entering waterbodies.

#### Water Quality Standards (WQS)

WQS are developed by DEQ to support the six designated uses for surface waters in Virginia:



*\*where applicable*

- WQS establish both narrative and numeric criteria to protect a waterbody's designated uses and implements an anti-degradation policy to prevent damaging surface waters.
- Waterbodies that do not support their designated uses are considered to have 'impaired' water quality. DEQ takes a lead role in developing cleanup studies to address the cause(s) of the impairments and establish cleanup plans.

#### Water Quality Monitoring (WQM)

- Water quality is an important factor in healthy ecosystems.
- EPA and Virginia's State Water Control Board authorize DEQ to protect and regulating water quality in the Commonwealth.
- WQM involves collecting data like pH and temperature needed to assess the quality of Virginia's waters and to identify sources of pollution.
- DEQ has several water quality programs that make up its Continuous Planning Process (CPP).

To protect water quality, DEQ's CPP includes:

1. *Monitoring and assessing water quality*
2. *Limiting the discharge of point source pollutants*
3. *Promoting the implementation of control programs and practices to mitigate impacts from nonpoint source pollutants*



Take a look at the full CPP cycle in the figure to the right.

## How You Can Help:

Put trash & litter in bins



Proper disposal of household cleaners



Pick up pet waste



Use less lawn & garden chemicals



Volunteer



Maintain your septic system



### Ways to volunteer:

1. [Work with a community organization](#) on a clean-up event or a storm drain art project
2. [Volunteer as a scientist](#) by monitoring a Virginia waterbody
3. [Nominate](#) a waterbody for monitoring by DEQ

### Other Resources:

- **DEQ's [Virginia Environmental Data Hub](#):** Geospatial tools that allow users to explore our water quality monitoring programs and results
- **EPA's [How's My Waterway](#):** Learn more about your local water quality
- [Apply for a DEQ Citizen Monitoring Grant](#) (next application cycle opens in summer 2024)
- [Submit your water monitoring data](#) to DEQ

### Contact:

#### DEQ – Central Office

1111 E. Main St.  
Richmond, Va. 23219

804.698.4000  
[deq.virginia.gov](http://deq.virginia.gov)

[Learn More about Water Quality Monitoring in Virginia](#)

