is a measure of the clarity of a water sample and is related to solids content. The laboratory test is based on the scattering and absorption of light by the sample and the results are expressed in Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTU).

Color

The color of natural water is primarily due to the leaching of organic debris and is empirically determined by comparing the sample with known concentrations of colored solution. It is then expressed in standard units of color. Severe color problems resulting from a pollution discharge are described qualitatively rather than numerically. Although color may not be harmful to aquatic life, it may render the water unacceptable for drinking purposes and for some types of industrial use.

Other Parameters

Depending upon specific river conditions, a water quality survey may include additional analyses such as those for oil and grease or heavy metal content. Grease in a wastewater consists of a mixture of fats, waxes, free fatty acides, calcium and magnesium soaps, mineral oils, and certain other nonfatty substances.

Heavy metals are toxic to aquatic organisms when present in sufficient quantities. They may also have an adverse effect on sewage and industrial wastewater treatment systems. Commonly occurring metals that are often monitored are cadmium, chromium, copper, iron, lead, manganese, nickel, and zinc.