SELECTED ENVIRONMENTAL ACRONYM LIST

2026 National Clean Water Law & Enforcement Seminar

November 11 – 13, 2026

NACWA adds to the acronym list each year. Please submit nominations or omissions to Ann Taylor, NACWA's Paralegal at ataylor@nacwa.org.

ACWA	Association of Clean Water Administrators
ALJ	Administrative Law Judge. See 40 C.F.R. Part 22
AMWA	Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies
ANPRM	Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
APA	Federal Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. § 551 et seq.
AR	American Rivers
AWWA	American Water Works Association
BANANA	Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anyone (extreme form of NIMBY)
BAT	Best Available Technology for toxic pollution control under CWA
BCT	Best Conventional Technology for organic pollution control under CWA
BEACH Act	Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act of 2000
BMPs	Best Management Practices for controlling water pollution, particularly for MS4s
BOD5	Five-day Biochemical Oxygen Demand
BPT	Best Practicable Technology currently available for pollution control under CWA
BRIC	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Act
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAFO	Combined Animal Feeding Operation under CWA
CD	Consent Decree
CEQ	White House Council on Environmental Quality. See 40 C.F.R. Part 1500 et seq.
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, 42 U.S.C. §9601 et seq. (also known as "Superfund")
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CLF	Conservation Law Foundation
CLG	Career Limiting Gesture
CMOM	Capacity-Management, Operations & Maintenance (program for collection systems)

CR	Continuing Resolution
CSO	Combined Sewer Overflow
CWA	Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. § 1251 et seq. See also FWPCA
CYA	Common usage, and frequently good advice
DHC	Direct Hydrologic Connection
DOA	US Department of Agriculture
DOE	US Department of Energy
DOJ	US Department of Justice
DOT	US Department of Transportation
DQA	Data Quality Act (common name for the *Information Quality Act*)
EAB	Environmental Appeals Board (part of EPA; hears NPDES permit appeals)
EDCs	Endocrine Disrupting Compounds
EJ	Environmental Justice
ELG	Effluent Limitation Guidelines
ENRD	Environment and Natural Resources Division of the US Department of Justice
EPA	US Environmental Protection Agency
EPW	Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
ESA	Endangered Species Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq.
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Administration
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, part of the APA
FR	Federal Register *(or Fed. Reg.)*
FWPCA	Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972, commonly known as Clean Water Act (CWA), amended by Clean Water Act Amendments of 1977, Water Quality Amendments of 1986, the Wet Weather Water Quality Act of 2000, and the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act of 2000
GAO	US Government Accountability Office
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GI	Green Infrastructure

ICR	Information Collection Request
IP	Integrated Planning
IUP	Intended Use Plan
LID	Low Impact Development
LTCP	Long-term control plan for CSOs under CWA
MACT	Maximum Achievable Control Technology under the Clean Air Act
MCL	Maximum Contaminant Levels for chemical constituents under the SDWA
MEP	Maximum Extent Practicable, pollutant removal standard for MS4s under CWA Section 402(p)(3)(B)(iii)
METF	Maximum Extent Technically Feasible, pollutant removal standard for federal projects owned MS4s under Energy Independence and Security Act
MHI	Median Household Income for determining financial capability/affordability
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement, often between US EPA and DOJ or State agency
MRB	Mississippi River Basin
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NHSM	Non-Hazardous Secondary Material
NIMBY	Not in My Back Yard (milder form of BANANA)
NIMTO	Not in My Term of Office
NMCs	Nine Minimum Controls for CSOs under CWA
NNC	Numeric Nutrient Criteria
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOI	Notice of Intent to Comply with a General Permit (under MS4 program)
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System, CWA Section 402 permitting program. See 40 C.F.R. Part 122
NPS	Nonpoint Source
NRC	National Research Council

NRDC	Natural Resources Defense Council
NRWA	National Rural Water Association
OAR	EPA Office of Air and Radiation
OCCT	Optimal Corrosion Control Treatment (under SDWA)
OECA	EPA Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance
OLC	Office of Legal Counsel at the US Department of Justice
OMB	White House Office of Management and Budget
OPPE	EPA Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation. See 40 C.F.R. §1.39(b)
OW	EPA Office of Water
PEFT	Peak Excess Flow Treatment Facility (for wet weather)
PFAS/PFOA	Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances
pH	Measure of acidity or alkalinity on logarithmic scale
POTW	Publicly Owned Treatment Works, commonly known as wastewater treatment plants, regulated under the CWA
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, 42 U.S.C. § 6901 et seq.
RDA	Residual Designation Authority (For MS4s – see 33 U.S.C § 1342 (p)(2)(E), (p)(6) and 40 C.F.R. § 122.26(a)(9)(i)(D))
RMCL	Recommend Maximum Contaminant Level for chemical constituents under the SDWA, typically more stringent than MCLs
RQ	Reportable Quantity of hazardous substance release under CERCLA or CWA. See 40 C.F.R. Part 302
SAB	US EPA Science Advisory Board
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SDWA	Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. § 3001 et seq.
SIU	Significant Industrial User in CWA Pretreatment program
SOL	Statute of Limitations (or all out of luck, depending on usage)
SRF	State Revolving Loan Fund for either Clean Water (wastewater) or Drinking Water. Both the Clean Water and Drinking Water SRF are federal loan programs administered by states to provide funding for water infrastructure projects

SSI	Sewage Sludge Incinerator
SSO	Sanitary Sewer Overflow
TAF	Targeted Action Funds
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TSCA	Toxic Substance Control Act
TSS	Total Suspended (non-filterable) Solids in effluent stream under CWA. See 40 C.F.R. Part 401
UAA	Use Attainability Analysis. See 40 C.F.R. Part 131.10(g)
UIC	Underground Injection Control. See 40 C.F.R. Part 146
UOTF	Utility of the Future
USC	United States Code
USDW	Underground Source of Drinking Water
WEF	Water Environment Federation
WERF	Water Environment Research Foundation
WET	Whole Effluent Toxicity
WIFIA	Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act
WLA	Waste Load Allocation
WQBEL	Water Quality Based Effluent Limitation
WQS	Water Quality Standards. See 40 C.F.R. Part 120
WRDA	Water Resources Development Act

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