



What is a TMDL?

A TMDL, or Total Maximum Daily Load, describes the greatest amount of a pollutant, such as phosphorus or *E. coli*, that a waterbody can receive without impacting its designated use. Designated uses include fishing, general recreation, and general support of aquatic life. The load, or budget for the pollutant, is allocated among the known pollution sources in the watershed, and measures to reduce the pollutant are developed.

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) develops TMDLS for impaired waterways that exceed the load. In North Central Texas, the pollutant of concern is *E. coli*.



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The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is working with stakeholders to implement best management practices to address and prevent bacteria TMDLs in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex.

To view the current Implementation Plan, or to utilize available resources, please visit www.nctcog.org/TMDL.

What is a TMDL?

A guide for understanding Total Maximum Daily Loads and their importance to the North Central Texas region



Where does *E. coli* come from?

E. coli can come from a variety of sources, including pet waste, sanitary sewer overflows, agricultural practices, wastewater treatment plants, illicit discharges, septic systems, wildlife waste, and more.



What impacts do TMDLs have on Stormwater Permits?

- Permit holders for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) must annually evaluate the status of their receiving waterbodies to determine whether or not they are impaired.
- Within two years of a waterbody's inclusion on the 303(d) list, the permit holder must comply with specific requirements to address the impairment.
- The permit holder must determine if they may be a source of *E. coli* and if so, the Stormwater Management Program, or SWMP, must identify potential significant sources and develop and implement focused BMPs for those sources.
- The SWMP and annual reports must include information on targeted controls, measurable goals, identification of benchmarks, and monitoring or assessment of progress toward addressing the impairment.

How can TMDLs be addressed?

TMDLs can be addressed through implementing best management practices including public education, regular monitoring, pet waste stations at parks, and more.

The NCTCOG Implementation Plan, or I-Plan, contains specific examples of best management practices and goals to help reduce bacteria in waterways. Permit holders may utilize these best management practices or develop their own.

How are TMDLs Developed?

The TCEQ receives and reviews sampling and monitoring data for each waterbody that is reported in the Texas Integrated Report of Surface Water Quality biennially. Once a freshwater waterbody has exceeded the set limit for *E. coli*, the waterbody is added to the Texas Integrated Report's 303(d) list, officially categorizing it as impaired for bacteria.

Once a waterbody has been added to the list, the TCEQ develops technical TMDL information that includes specific details on the watershed, including land use, future growth expectations, and other items that may impact how the load is distributed.

After the technical TMDL document is complete, it is adopted by TCEQ, added to the Texas Water Quality Management Plan, and approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency. At this point, it is also added to the NCTCOG Implementation Plan.

North Central Texas TMDL Program

The North Central Texas Council of Governments administers the regional TMDL program through grant funds received from the TCEQ. As part of this program, NCTCOG and stakeholders developed an Implementation Plan or I-Plan in 2013. The I-Plan outlines strategic goals and best management practices that can be utilized to help address impaired water bodies in the North Central Texas region.

This program also supports the TMDL Coordination Committee and its associated subcommittees, which meet regularly to share information, challenges, and successes with peers. The TMDL subcommittees also guide the development of projects and workshops relevant to the TMDL program, including educational videos, public educational materials, and more. Additional information, including the I-Plan, reports, and available resources, are available online at www.nctcog.org/TMDL.