



FACT SHEET

Aquatic Life Ambient Water Quality Criteria - Nonylphenol - Final

EPA is releasing final aquatic life ambient water quality criteria for nonylphenol. We developed acute and chronic criteria recommendations for nonylphenol designed to protect aquatic life in both fresh and saltwater. These criteria can form the basis for state and tribal water quality standards.

What is Nonylphenol?

Nonylphenol is an organic chemical produced in large quantities in the United States. It is toxic to aquatic life, causing reproductive effects in aquatic organisms. Nonylphenol is moderately soluble and resistant to natural degradation in water. It is used as a chemical intermediate and is often found in wastewater treatment plant effluent as a breakdown product from surfactants and detergents. The final ambient water quality criteria document for nonylphenol contains criteria designed to protect aquatic organisms and their uses. These criteria are guidance for states and tribes and, in themselves, have no binding legal effect. However, they may form the basis for state water quality standards and become enforceable through NPDES permits or other environmental programs. These nonylphenol ambient water quality criteria are published pursuant to Section 304(a) of the Clean Water Act (CWA). EPA published draft criteria for nonylphenol on January 5, 2004 at 69 FR 340 and solicited scientific input. Based on this input, EPA has revised some of the criteria.

What are the final nonylphenol criteria concentrations?

Freshwater Aquatic Life:

Freshwater aquatic life and their uses should not be affected if the one-hour average concentration of nonylphenol does not exceed 28 ug/L more than once every three years on the average (acute criterion) and if the four-day average concentration of nonylphenol does not exceed 6.6 ug/l more than once every three years on the average (chronic criterion).

Saltwater Aquatic Life:

Saltwater aquatic life and their uses should not be affected if the one-hour average concentration of nonylphenol does not exceed 7.0 ug/L more than once every three years on the average (acute criterion) and if the four-day average concentration of nonylphenol does not exceed 1.7 ug/L more than once every three years on the average (chronic criterion).

How do I get a copy of the final Nonylphenol document?

You can get copies of the "Aquatic Life Ambient Water Quality Criteria - Nonylphenol - Final" (EPA-822-R-05-005) from EPA's Water Resource Center by calling (202) 566-1729. You can request a copy by sending an e-mail to center.water.resource@epa.gov or by conventional mail to: EPA Water Resource Center, 4101T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20460. You can also download the document from EPA's web site at <http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/criteria/nonylphenol/>.