

Wastewater Pollution

A growing regional problem

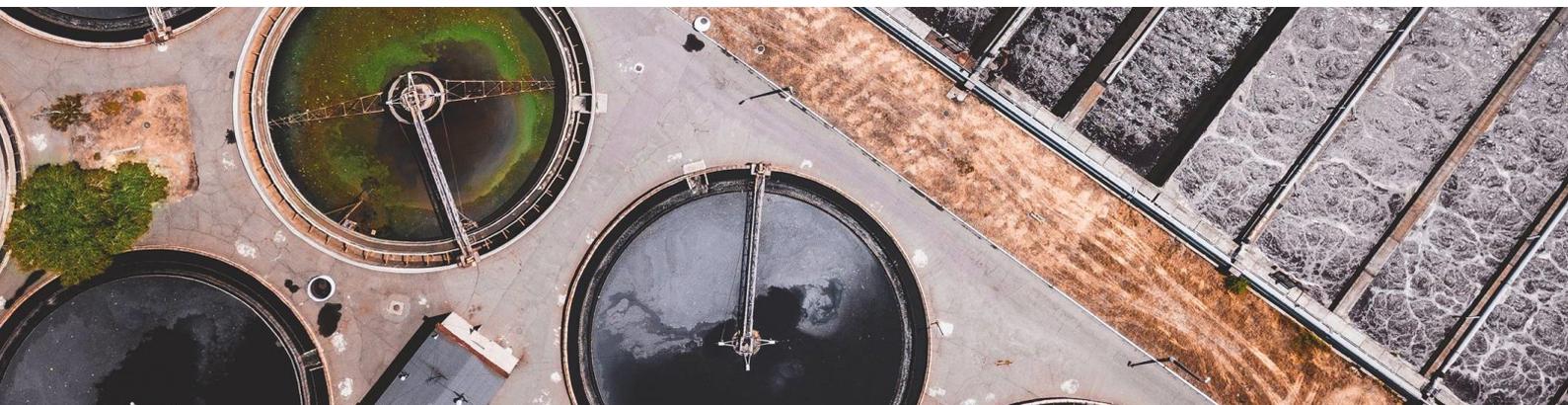


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WASHINGTON FACTS

NUMBER OF SEWAGE PLANTS

120, with 67 discharging to the Sound.

GOOD NITROGEN STANDARD

Nationwide, plants achieve 3 mg/L

PLANTS WITH NUTRIENT CONTROLS

16 of the 67 plants have nutrient controls.
13 of the 67 already discharge $\leq 8\text{mg/L/d}$.

BIGGEST NUTRIENT POLLUTERS

Seattle/King County and Tacoma's largest Plants discharge >70% of the total Nitrogen load from the 67 sewage plants.

ADVANCED TREATMENT CONTROLS

- Nutrients
- Toxic Chemicals
- Pharmaceuticals
- Microplastics

Right now, dissolved oxygen levels in many parts of Puget Sound and the Salish Sea are below the levels needed for fish and other marine life to thrive. Nearly 20 years of research and scientific data confirm that municipal sewage treatment plants are the biggest human source of Puget Sound's nutrient problem. Our pollution problem will only get worse as the population increases and climate changes: now is the time to take action to protect Puget Sound and the marine life and people that depend on it.

THE PROBLEM

Washington's Department of Ecology (Ecology) has determined that sewage treatment plants are polluting Puget Sound, causing or contributing to Clean Water Act violations. Nutrient pollution – primarily nitrogen – is causing too much plant and algae growth, reducing the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water. Low levels of dissolved oxygen can stress fish and worsen ocean acidification, throwing the ecosystem off balance. Yet, existing standards only require plants to use "Secondary" treatment, which does not control nitrogen.

A SOLUTION

Fortunately, solutions are well known. "Advanced" or "Tertiary" treatment removes most nitrogen. Some technologies also remove toxic chemicals, micro-plastics, and pharmaceuticals. A Nutrient General Permit for Puget Sound plants has the potential to stop nutrient pollution in an efficient way, by requiring advanced treatment. Ecology has the legal authority and responsibility to require these plants to upgrade to advanced treatment, protecting water, salmon, orca, and people.

Communities across the region and the U.S. have invested in clean water, from Shelton to Sequim to Spokane. It would not be fair for larger cities like Seattle and Tacoma to avoid this obligation.

TAKE ACTION [HERE!](https://p2a.co/eeUepiZ)
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