

*Turbidity...*  
*a Measure of Water Quality*

:Turbidity is the measure of water clarity. The clearer the water, the lower the turbidity value.

: High turbidity levels result from both natural and human-caused activities, generally from eroded soils or disturbed streambed sediments.

: High turbidity levels adversely affect salmonid species and irrigation delivery systems.

: It's important to your neighbors and to the environment that irrigation and natural waterways are kept clean.



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**Kittitas County**  
**Water Purveyors**

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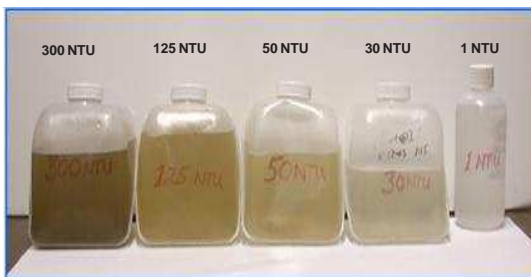
*2011 Water Quality*  
*Compliance Policy*



## KCWP's 2011 Water Quality Policy

The Kittitas County Water Purveyors (KCWP) Board of Directors has prepared a policy to protect streams and irrigation systems from high turbidity return flow off irrigated lands. Return flow is water leaving an agricultural field entering ditches or creeks. High turbidity return flow is defined as greater than 100 NTU (turbidity units), as measured by a laboratory turbidity meter or 150 NTU measured with a field turbidity tube. Complementary tubes, funded in part by the Department of Ecology, are available through the KCWP.

Through the use of this policy, irrigation districts will be able to meet the water quality levels required by the Washington State Department of Ecology. If the levels are not met, all water users in Kittitas County will be at increased risk of enforcement actions by Ecology. This policy is one of the tools local irrigation districts are using to continue clean water deliveries to local irrigators and livestock producers.



The key water quality compliance policy elements are:

1. The manager of the canal system that receives high turbidity return flow will:
  - a) identify the source and record the details of the incident,
  - b) contact the manager of the canal system that provides irrigation water to the identified source, and
  - c) share information.
2. The manager who delivers water to the source of the water quality impairment will contact the source landowner and share turbidity sampling results, TMDL information and compliance targets, and water quality policy procedures. The manager will provide educational information and encourage water user to obtain technical assistance if needed to address causes and remedies. If the source is not identifiable or is a common drain, evaluate the potential causes and contact all potential turbidity source landowners.



If a second occurrence is recorded at the same site, the landowner will be contacted again and informed that he/she must make improvements and/or engage a technical service provider\* within two weeks of notification.

The landowner will be informed that if a third violation is recorded within current irrigation season, the information will be forwarded to Washington State Department of Ecology for further action.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure that purveyors are protected and landowners are able to continue efficient operations. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

\* Technical assistance can be obtained from the Kittitas County Conservation District, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Kittitas County Water Purveyors, and other local entities.



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