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Data Sources and Methods: Freshwater Quality Indicator

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1. Introduction

The Freshwater Quality Indicator is a part of the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators (CESI) program, which provides data and information to track Canada's performance on key environmental sustainability issues.

2. Description and rationale of the Freshwater Quality indicator

2.1 Description

The Freshwater Quality Indicator (WQI) provides an overall measure of the ability of freshwater bodies to support aquatic life at selected monitoring stations across Canada. It is a water quality guideline-driven tool used to distill large amounts of water quality data at a monitoring station into a single index. Water quality at a monitoring station is considered excellent when ambient water quality does not exceed guidelines at any time for any of all selected parameters.

2.2 Rationale

Clean water is essential to sustain healthy ecosystems and the many benefits they provide us. The WQI provides a national perspective of the overall quality of untreated freshwater for aquatic life in Canada. If measured ambient water quality does not exceed its water quality guideline, it can be assumed water quality is acceptable for aquatic plants and animals. The WQI provides information about the state of and change through time of surface freshwater quality to help inform water resource management.

2.3 Changes since last report

An analysis of changes through time was added to track how the national WQI has been changing since 2003. The analysis identified the number of stations where the WQI was improving or deteriorating and where no change was detected.

3. Data

3.1 Data source

Water quality data for 2007 to 2009 were obtained from a number of monitoring programs managed by federal and provincial authorities as well as by federal-provincial agreements across the country. The complete list can be found in Annex 1.

Freshwater quality guidelines were obtained from the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) water quality guidelines for the protection of aquatic life, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), and provincial and territorial sources. A complete list of water quality guidelines used by jurisdiction can be found in Annex 2.

Drainage regions used in the regional WQI correspond to those defined in Statistics Canada's Standard Drainage Area Classification.¹

The upstream drainage area of core monitoring stations was delineated using Natural Resources Canada's National Hydro Network.²

Human activity in the drainage basin of core monitoring stations was characterized based on population density using Statistics Canada's 2006 Census of Population, mine locations using Natural Resources Canada's 2006 Census of Mines, point-source agricultural activity locations using Statistics Canada's 2006 Census of Agriculture and land cover using Natural Resources Canada's land cover maps.^{3,4}

3.2 Spatial coverage

The national WQI is calculated using a set of core stations selected to be representative of surface freshwater quality across Canada and the human pressure exerted on it. The 2007-2009 national WQI was calculated using 173 core stations. Because of data availability issues, 2006-2008 data were used as a proxy of the 2007-2009 data for 24 core sites in Quebec.

The local WQI is reported for the 149 core stations for which 2007-2009 data are available and 161 additional local stations across Canada. Data for 2007-2009 for 24 Quebec core stations are not included due to data availability issues. The number of core stations changes every year due to missing data. For this year's report, water quality is reported at 173 core stations compared to 176 stations in last year's report. Core stations are added when they meet data standards and requirements of the WQI.

Core station selection

Among Canada's 25 drainage regions, 16 regions were selected for the WQI core network based on population density (Figure 1). Within the 16 selected drainage regions, core stations were selected to avoid overlapping drainage areas and to ensure stations are independent of one another. The upstream drainage area of monitoring stations was delineated by Statistics Canada using the National Hydro Network.⁵ Where upstream drainage areas of monitoring stations overlap, the most downstream station was retained for the core network as this station is impacted by the maximum area in the river basin and, to some degree, reflects the cumulative impact of all upstream stresses. For 14 large rivers, such as the Athabasca and North Saskatchewan rivers, core stations were established in the upper, mid and lower portions of the river as well as the most downstream stations on each tributary, when available. Additional core stations were established on these rivers as water travels thousands of kilometres from its source to its mouth. Water quality changes along the way and cannot be

¹ Statistics Canada (2009) Standard Drainage Area Classification (SDAC) 2003. Retrieved on 13 December 2011. (<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/subjects-sujets/standard-norme/sdac-ctad/sdacinfo2-ctadinfo2-eng.htm>)

² Natural Resources Canada (2007) National Hydro Network, Canada. Retrieved on 10 May 2011. (<http://www.geobase.ca/geobase/en/data/nhn/description.html>)

³ Natural Resources Canada (2005) Multi-Temporal Land Cover Maps of Canada using NOAA AVHRR 1-km data from 1985-2005, 1st edition, Canada Centre for Remote Sensing. Retrieved on 10 May 2011. (ftp://ftp.ccrs.nrcan.gc.ca/ad/NLCCLandCover/LandcoverCanada1985_2005_1KM/LC85_05_Metadata.html)

⁴ Natural Resources Canada (2008) Land Cover Map of Canada 2005, Canada Centre for Remote Sensing. Retrieved on 10 May 2011. (ftp://ftp.ccrs.nrcan.gc.ca/ad/NLCCLandCover/LandcoverCanada2005_250m/)

⁵ Henry, M *et al.* (2009) Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators: Water Quality Index Representativity Report, Statistics Canada. Retrieved on 10 May 2011. (http://www.geobase.ca/doc/specs/pdf/GeoBase_nHN_UseCase_Statcan.pdf)

summarized by a unique downstream monitoring station. The final selection of core stations ensures monitoring stations are well distributed among provinces, territories and drainage regions.

Figure 1: Geographic extent of the 16 drainage regions selected for the core network



Water quality was also assessed at monitoring stations, called local stations, not included in the core network for local reporting. Specific information on water quality at individual core and local stations can be found in the CESI interactive map.

3.3 Temporal coverage

The WQI was calculated using a minimum of four samples per year from 2007 to 2009 for southern sites. A minimum of three samples per year is allowed for northern and remote stations because winter access can be difficult. A sensitivity analysis concluded no significant

difference existed in the water quality score when the mid-winter sample was excluded.⁶ For lake stations, a minimum of two samples per year is required to be taken during the fall and spring mixing, or four samples per year if taken during other time periods.

Three years of data are used to dampen temporal variability in WQI results caused by annual fluctuations in weather and hydrology.⁷ By using a three-year roll-up, the WQI is more representative of the overall freshwater quality at a station. It minimizes the effects of events such as high or low flow by avoiding one sample driving the WQI score up or down.

Minimum sampling requirements were not met at seven core stations: MB05LES015, MB05LIS007, MB05LIS009, MB05LIS014, MB05LIS016, MB05TGS006 and MB05LGS001. These stations were closely evaluated by local water quality experts and included because the data were consistent with previous years and considered representative of local water quality.

Sample timing and frequency varies among monitoring stations and is set according to the monitoring program objectives. There are up to 60 samples for a given parameter at some stations.

3.4 Data completeness

Data quality assurance and control (QA/QC) is performed within each monitoring program providing data for the WQI. Each monitoring program follows standardized methods for sample collection in the field. Chemical analyses are done in Canadian laboratories accredited by the Canadian Association for Laboratory Accreditation or the Canadian Standards Council.

For all stations, additional QA/QC on monitoring datasets and calculations of the water quality score are undertaken by Environment Canada. The QA/QC process ensures the dataset meets minimum data requirements and standards for calculation are respected. This process leads to removal of parameters due to low sampling frequencies or because detection limits are higher than guidelines used in the calculation. Unusually high or low values in the monitoring datasets are double-checked and confirmed through consultation with the data provider. WQI scores and station information from the monitoring programs are stored in a central WQI dictionary, which facilitates the verification of the number of samples, timing location of monitoring stations and calculations.

3.5 Data timeliness

The WQI was calculated using data from 2007 to 2009, the most recent data available from all monitoring programs. For ten core stations, data from the end of December 2006 or the beginning of January 2010 were used to meet minimum samples number requirements. Data from 2006-08 were used as a proxy for the national, regional and human activity impact WQI for the 24 provincial stations in Quebec because data from 2009 were not available at the time of reporting.

⁶ Statistics Canada (2007) Behaviour Study on the Water Quality Index of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment. Retrieved on 16 May 2011. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/16-001-m/16-001-m2007003-eng.htm>

⁷ Government of Canada (2008) Technical guidance document for Water Quality Indicator practitioners reporting under the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators (CESI) initiative 2008, p.15-16. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=FCE44CD8-A2C6-4659-8CC8-EFEAD92EF1F0>)

4. Methods

4.1 Computing the Water Quality Index

The WQI is calculated using the Water Quality Index as endorsed by the CCME.⁸ The CCME Water Quality Index consists of three factors: scope, frequency and amplitude (equation 1).⁹ Scope (F1) is the percentage of parameters where water quality guidelines are not met, frequency (F2) is the percentage of samples where water quality guidelines are not met and amplitude (F3) is the amount by which the water quality guidelines are not met. The score is normalized to produce a score between 1 and 100.

$$WQI = 100 - \left(\frac{\sqrt{F_1^2 + F_2^2 + F_3^2}}{1.732} \right) \quad (\text{Equation 1})$$

Scores are categorized into five categories defined based on the best available information, expert judgement and the general public's expectations of water quality (Table 1).¹⁰ The WQI adopts the CCME's water quality index categorization.

Table 1: Score rankings for the CCME Water Quality Index

Ranking	Interpretation
Excellent (95.0 to 100.0)	Water quality measurements never or very rarely exceed water quality guidelines.
Good (80.0 to 94.9)	Water quality measurements rarely exceed water quality guidelines and, usually, by a narrow margin.
Fair (65.0 to 79.9)	Water quality measurements sometimes exceed water quality guidelines and, possibly, by a wide margin.
Marginal (45.0 to 64.9)	Water quality measurements often exceed water quality guidelines and/or exceed the guidelines by a considerable margin.
Poor (0 to 44.9)	Water quality measurements usually exceed water quality guidelines and/or exceed the guidelines by a considerable margin.

4.2 Parameter selection

Provincial and territorial water quality experts select parameters, or chemical substances and physical properties, to be assessed based on knowledge of local water quality stressors. A selection of 8-12 parameters is recommended to ensure comparability and consistency in a parameter's relative influence on the final WQI ranking.¹¹ Typically, at least one form of the following parameters groups is reported at each monitoring station: nutrients (e.g., phosphorus, nitrate, nitrite, total nitrogen), metals (e.g., zinc, copper, lead), physical parameters (e.g., pH, turbidity) and two to four regionally specific parameters (e.g., chloride,

⁸ Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2001) CCME Water Quality Index 1.0 User's Manual, Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/assets/pdf/wqi_usermanualfctsht_e.pdf)

⁹ Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2001) CCME Water Quality Index 1.0 Technical Report. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/assets/pdf/wqi_techrptfctsht_e.pdf)

¹⁰ Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2001) CCME Water Quality Index 1.0 User's Manual. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/assets/pdf/wqi_usermanualfctsht_e.pdf)

¹¹ Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2006) A sensitivity analysis of the Canadian Water Quality Index. Retrieved on 12 May 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/assets/pdf/wqi_sensitivity_analysis_rpt_web.pdf)

ammonia, dissolved oxygen, pesticides).¹² Between 5 and 15 parameters are used to assess water quality at each monitoring station. A sample value must be available for each year for at least 33% of the total number of samples for a parameter to be included in the WQI.

For all jurisdictions except British Columbia and Yukon, a common suite of parameters is assessed at all monitoring stations with station-specific parameters added as required. In British Columbia, a station-specific selection of parameters is carried out with dissolved oxygen, phosphorus, pH and water temperature included when available. Annex 2 lists all parameters measured in each province and territory. The CESI interactive map lists parameters at each individual station.

In British Columbia and Yukon, metals are excluded from the indicator when samples are collected when turbidity is high. For each station, the turbidity cut-off is assessed based on long-term monitoring data to take into consideration station-specific conditions. A station-specific water quality guideline is calculated for a particular metal based on the 5th percentile of long-term monitoring data for hardness or pH.¹³ A turbidity cut-off is calculated by assessing turbidity associated with the identified water quality guideline through a regression analysis of long-term turbidity and metal data specific to that station. In these two jurisdictions, metal data are discarded from the indicator calculations during high-turbidity events on the basis that these occurrences of short-term exposure pose low risk to aquatic life. Trimming data based on high-turbidity events also improves the association between the WQI and indices of benthic community composition improving the assessment of risk to aquatic life.¹⁴

4.3 Water quality guideline selection

Water quality guidelines are recommended numerical limits or narrative statements for a variety of chemical substances and physical parameters, which, if exceeded, may impair aquatic life. They are based on existing knowledge of a substance's environmental fate and behaviour and its chronic or acute toxicity. The WQI uses chronic water quality guidelines for the protection of aquatic life. Quebec uses acute water quality guidelines for metals.

Water quality guidelines are selected to be locally relevant, and thus different water quality guidelines are used among and within provinces and territories. The Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life developed by the CCME are recommended if locally relevant.¹⁵ Other sources of guidelines include the U.S. EPA or provincial or territorial environmental departments. Provincial or territorial water quality experts select the guidelines to use in the WQI. Annex 2 provides a complete list of guidelines used by provinces and territories, and their source.

Background concentrations of naturally occurring substances and other local river characteristics can affect the measured concentration and toxicity of certain substances. In these cases, station-specific guidelines (SSG) are developed using background concentration

¹² British Columbia Ministry of Environment (1997) Methods for deriving station-specific water quality objectives in British Columbia and Yukon. Retrieved on 3 August 2011. (http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/BCguidelines/effects_ratio/effectsratio.html)

¹³ Metal water quality guidelines are defined on the basis of ambient pH or hardness concentrations given these parameters affect the bioavailability of metals in the water. For details on the definition of metal guidelines, please consult Annex 1 and associated sources cited for each guideline.

¹⁴ Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2009) Reducing the Sensitivity of the Water Quality Index to Episodic Events. Retrieved on 6 June 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/publications/list_publications.html)

¹⁵ Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (undated) Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life. Retrieved on 12 May 2011. For a complete list of guidelines, consult the Factsheets section. (<http://ceqg-rcqe.ccme.ca/>)

procedures¹⁶ or a rapid assessment approach.¹⁷ The rapid assessment approach uses long-term monitoring data and corrects for natural events, such as high flows, that may influence results.

4.4 Classification of stations according to human activity

The drainage area of each monitoring station was delineated using the National Hydro Network.¹⁸ Human activity was assessed in the drainage area of core stations and classified according to the criteria presented in Table 2. Data sources are detailed in section 3.1. Agricultural land cover corresponds to land cover classes 26, 27, 28 and 29. Undisturbed land cover corresponds to land cover classes 0, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 38. A full description of land cover classes is available in the land cover database of Canada.¹⁹

Stations added to the core network after 2010 were not included in the initial classification exercise. Land use in the drainage area of 16 core stations in Newfoundland and Quebec was defined by the organization responsible for the monitoring program based on local knowledge of the drainage area. Land use for two stations in British Columbia and one in Prince Edward Island has not been classified due to methodological constraints.

Table 2: Criteria for the classification of human activity at monitoring stations

Land use	Criteria
Agriculture	> 20% of drainage area is agricultural land cover
Mining	Presence of at least one mine
Mixed	Agriculture and Mining OR Agriculture and Population density >25 persons/km ² OR Mining and Population density > 50 persons/km ²
Remote	> 95% of drainage area is undisturbed land cover

To evaluate if land use had a significant effect on the WQI, a chi-square test of independence was performed. The poor and marginal categories and good and excellent categories were grouped for this test to produce adequate sample sizes. The relationship between water quality categories and land use was statistically significant ($X^2 = 35.8$, $df = 6$, $P < 0.001$).

4.5 Assessing changes in the indicator through time

A subset of 80 stations from 13 drainage regions was selected from the core network to assess changes in the WQI through time. This subset corresponds to all core stations with data available from 2003 to 2009. Changes in water quality were measured by assessing change between the 2003-05 and 2007-09 reporting periods. The 2003-05 period was selected as the starting point of the change analysis as it was the first period with sufficient data available for the analysis.

For this analysis, WQI scores for the 2003-05 period were recalculated using parameters and guidelines used in the 2007-09 WQI. Guidelines and parameter selection have evolved over

¹⁶ Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2003) Guidance on the Station-Specific Application of Water Quality Guidelines in Canada: Procedures for Deriving Numerical Water Quality Objectives. Retrieved on 12 May 2011.

¹⁷ Government of Canada (2008) Technical guidance document for Water Quality Indicator practitioners reporting under the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators (CESI) initiative 2008, p.18. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=FCE44CD8-A2C6-4659-8CC8-EFEAD92EF1F0>)

¹⁸ Henry, M *et al.* (2009) Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators: Water Quality Index Representivity Report, Statistics Canada. Retrieved on 10 May 2011.

¹⁹ Natural Resources Canada (2008) Land Cover Map of Canada 2005, Canada Centre for Remote Sensing. Retrieved on 10 May 2011. (ftp://ftp.ccrs.nrcan.gc.ca/ad/NLCCLandCover/LandcoverCanada2005_250m/)

time. Harmonizing parameters and guidelines avoids mistaking methodological changes for water quality change. When historical data were missing for a parameter, the parameter was dropped from the calculation of the score for both periods.

Confidence intervals were computed for freshwater quality scores using a non-parametric bootstrapping method.²⁰ To compute the confidence interval for a given station, a simulation of 10 000 scores was performed. For each iteration, the parameter suite measured for a given date is resampled randomly from all measurements taken from the same station and a simulated score is calculated. The confidence interval corresponds to the 95th percentile of the distribution of simulated scores.

A change in the WQI was considered significant at a station when no overlap existed between confidence intervals for 2003-05 and 2007-09 scores. A count of stations with improving, deteriorating and no change detected was compiled for the indicator of change through time.

5. Caveats and limitations

The ability of the WQI to provide information about freshwater quality relies on the adequacy of water quality guidelines. The WQI relies on freshwater quality guidelines that are derived without considering sediment load in a river when flows increase. Although site-specific guidelines attempt to remove the impact of elevated flows on parameter concentrations, elevated levels of naturally-occurring substances, such as minerals found in rocks, nutrients, glacier deposits and soils, can lower water quality ratings.

The WQI does not directly measure biological integrity; it measures if physical and chemical characteristics of freshwaters are acceptable for aquatic life. While physical and chemical measurements provide good proxies of biological quality, only biological information provides a direct measurement of conditions for aquatic life.

The WQI only assesses the quality of surface waters. Groundwater quality is not considered in this indicator.

The WQI reflects the overall state of water quality and will not show the effect of spills or other transient events unless these are frequent or long-lasting.

The selection of core stations is intended to represent freshwater quality in the portion of Canada where the majority of Canadians live. Monitoring stations used to calculate this indicator do not cover all potential water quality issues or problems in Canada. Canada's North, which is increasingly being developed, is under-represented in the WQI.

The WQI allows flexibility in the selection of parameters and guidelines. This flexibility allows local and regional water quality concerns to be reflected in the indicator. Because differences in parameters and guidelines occur among monitoring stations and jurisdictions, direct comparisons cannot be made among jurisdictions.

Analytical limitations and time requirements for the development of water quality guidelines affect the selection of parameters. Only parameters for which water quality guidelines exist can be included in the indicator. The absence of a water quality guideline for a parameter does not mean the parameter is not important.

The WQI is sensitive to the number of parameters and samples used by each jurisdiction. The number of parameters varies from five to 15. Between 9 and 60 samples can be used for a

²⁰ Shaarawi, AM (2011) Environmental Indicators: Their development and Application. Environment Canada.

given parameter. In general, the higher the number of parameters or samples used to calculate the index, the lower the WQI score.²¹

The change through time analysis includes 80 stations, but does not have the same representativeness of Canadian surface water quality as the national indicator because some core stations began sampling after 2003.

Annex 1: Monitoring programs providing data on ambient water quality

Province/territory	Monitoring program	Organization(s)
Alberta	Long-term River Network monitoring program	Alberta Environment
	Prairie Provinces Water Board	Environment Canada, Alberta Environment
British Columbia	Canada–British Columbia Water Quality Monitoring Agreement	British Columbia Ministry of Environment, Environment Canada
British Columbia and Yukon	Federal Water Quality Monitoring Program	Environment Canada, Parks Canada
Manitoba	Prairie Provinces Water Board, Canada–Manitoba Water Quality Monitoring Agreement	Environment Canada, Manitoba Water Stewardship
	International Red River Board, Federal Water Quality Monitoring Program	International Red River Board, including Environment Canada and Manitoba Water Stewardship
	Ambient water quality monitoring network	Manitoba Water Stewardship
New Brunswick	Canada–New Brunswick Water Quality Monitoring Agreement	Environment Canada, New Brunswick Department of Environment
	Long-range Transport of Atmospheric Pollutants Program	Environment Canada
	Surface water monitoring network, National Parks project	New Brunswick Department of Environment
Newfoundland and Labrador	Canada–Newfoundland and Labrador Water Quality Monitoring Agreement	Environment Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation
Nova Scotia	Long-range Transport of Atmospheric Pollutants Program	Environment Canada

²¹ Statistics Canada (2007) Behaviour Study on the Water Quality Index of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment. Retrieved on 16 May 2011. (<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/16-001-m/16-001-m2007003-eng.htm>)

Province/territory	Monitoring program	Organization(s)
	Pockwock-Bowater Watershed Study	Nova Scotia Environment
	Canadian Wildlife Service, park survey, Maritimes	Environment Canada
Ontario	Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network	Ontario Ministry of the Environment
Prince Edward Island	Canada–Prince Edward Island Water Quality Agreement	Environment Canada, Prince Edward Island Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry
Quebec	Réseau-Rivières	Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs du Québec
	The State of the St. Lawrence Monitoring Program	Environment Canada

Province/territory	Monitoring program	Organization(s)
Saskatchewan	Prairie Provinces Water Board	Environment Canada, Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment
	Souris River Bilateral Agreement, Federal Water Quality Monitoring Program	International Souris River Board, including Environment Canada and Manitoba Water Stewardship
	Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program	Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment
Northwest Territories and Nunavut	Northwest Territories–Nunavut extensive water quality monitoring network; Northern Energy MC Aquatic Quality Program—Northwest Territories portion of Mackenzie River Basin; Alberta–Northwest Territories transboundary rivers water quality monitoring program; Environment Canada–Parks Canada Northern bioregion national parks programs (seven national parks in Northwest Territories–Nunavut–northern Yukon: Nahanni, Tuktut Nogait, Aulavik, Ivvavik, Quttinirpaaq, Auyuittuq, Ukkusiksalik); Environment Canada–Fisheries and Oceans Canada Lower Hornaday River water quality monitoring program; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada water quality programs in Northwest Territories basins with Northern Development (Coppermine, Yellowknife, Lockhart, Slave, Hay, Liard, Peel, Snare, Burnside River basins)	Environment Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Parks Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Alberta Environment, Government of Northwest Territories (Environment and Natural Resources), Government of Nunavut (Department of Environment)
Yukon	Canada-Yukon Water Quality Monitoring Network	Yukon Environment, Environment Canada

Annex 2: Water quality guidelines used in each jurisdiction

Alberta

Parameter	Form	Guideline	Source
2,4-D ¹	total	4 µg/L	a
Aluminium ¹	dissolved	0.005 mg/L for pH < 6.5 0.1 mg/L for pH ≥ 6.5	b
Ammonia	un-ionized	19 µg/L	b
Arsenic	total	5 µg/L	a
Cadmium ¹	total	$e^{1.0166 \ln[\text{hardness}] - 3.924}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	c
Chloride ²	dissolved	150 mg/L	b
Copper ¹	total	7 µg/L	d
Copper ²	total	2 µg/L for hardness < 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L $e^{0.8545 \ln[\text{hardness}] - 1.465}$ * 0.2 µg/L for hardness > 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	b
Lead	total	$< e^{1.273 \ln[\text{hardness}] - 4.705}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	d
MCPA ¹		2.6 µg/L	a
Mercury ¹	total inorganic	0.026 µg/L	a
Nickel ²	total	$e^{0.76 \ln[\text{hardness}] + 1.06}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	b
Nitrogen	total	1 mg N/L	d
Oxygen	dissolved	6.5 mg/L	a d
pH ²		between 6.5 and 9	a
Phosphorus	total	0.05 mg/L	d e
Selenium ¹	total	2 µg/L	b
Zinc	total	7.5 µg/L for hardness ≤ 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L 7.5 + 0.75*(hardness-90) for hardness > 90mg [CaCO ₃]/L	b

¹ Applies to stations monitored under provincial monitoring programs.

² Applies to stations monitored under federal monitoring programs including the Prairie Provinces Water Board.

Sources - Alberta:

- a Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2007) Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life: Summary table, Update 7.1. Retrieved on 21 September 2011.
(<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=FCE44CD8-A2C6-4659-8CC8-EFEAD92EF1F0>)

- b Government of Canada (2008) Technical guidance document for water quality index practitioners reporting under the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators (CESI) initiative. Environment Canada and Statistics Canada. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=FCE44CD8-A2C6-4659-8CC8-EFEAD92EF1F0>)
- c United States Environmental Protection Agency (2001) 2001 Update of Ambient Water Quality Criteria for Cadmium. Document EPA 822-R-01-001. Retrieved on 3 August 2011. (<http://water.epa.gov/scitech/swguidance/standards/criteria/aqlife/pollutants/cadmium/cadfacts.cfm>)
- d Alberta Environment (1999) Surface water quality guidelines for use in Alberta. Retrieved on September 21, 2011. (<http://environment.alberta.ca/01323.html>)
- e Prairie Provinces Water Board (1992) Master Agreement on Apportionment. Schedule E: Agreement on Water Quality. Retrieved on 3 August 2011. (<http://www.ppwb.ca/information/115/index.html>)

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Parameter	Form	Guideline	Source
Alkalinity		20 mg [CaCO ₃]/L	a
Arsenic	total	5 µg/L	b
Cadmium	extractable, total	100.86log ₁₀ [hardness]-3.2 µg/L for hardness > 50 mg [CaCO ₃]/L 0.019 µg/L for hardness < 50 mg [CaCO ₃]/L SSG ¹ (certain stations)	b c
Chloride	dissolved, total	150 mg/L	d
Chromium	extractable, total	SSG ¹	a c e f g j i l m
Copper	extractable, total	2 µg/L for hardness < 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L $e^{0.8545 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 1.465 \cdot 0.2}$ for hardness > 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L SSG ¹	d e j l m n
Cyanide	weak acid dissociable	5 µg/L	b
Fluoride	total	0.3 mg/L	o
Iron	total	0.3 mg/L	d
Lead	extractable, total	$e^{1.273 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 4.705}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L SSG ¹	d p
Manganese	dissolved, total	SSG ¹	b k q
Molybdenum	total	SSG ¹	b m r
Nickel	total	$e^{0.76 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] + 1.06}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	d
Nitrate	total dissolved	2.93 mg N/L	d
Nitrite	total	0.02 mg N/L	s

Nitrate and Nitrite	dissolved	2.93 mg N/L	d
Nitrogen	total, total dissolved	SSG ¹	s
Oxygen	dissolved	SSG ¹	b t u
pH		SSG ¹	b c m t
Phosphorus	total and total dissolved	SSG ¹	d v
Selenium	dissolved, total	2 µg/L	d w
Silver	total	0.05 µg/L for hardness < 100 mg [CaCO ₃]/L 1.9 µg/L for hardness > 100 mg [CaCO ₃]/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L SSG ¹	d x
Sulphate	dissolved	50 mg/L	y
Temperature		SSG ¹	z
Thallium	extractable, total	0.8 µg/L	b
Turbidity		5 NTU	interim guideline
Uranium	total	10 µg/L	a
Zinc	extractable, total	SSG ¹	c e j k aa

¹ SSG denotes different station-specific guidelines or formulae were used at stations. For details on the derivation of station-specific guidelines, consult BCMOE (1997).

British Columbia - Sources:

- a British Columbia Ministry of Environment (2006) A compendium of working water quality guidelines for British Columbia. Retrieved on 3 August 2011.
(<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/BCguidelines/working.html>)
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(http://www.ccme.ca/publications/ceqg_rcqe.html?category_id=124)

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Manitoba

Parameter	Form	Guideline	Source
2,4-D		4 µg/L	a
Ammonia ¹	total as N	Calculation based on pH and temperature	b c
Ammonia ²	un-ionized	19 µg/L	d
Arsenic ¹	extractable, total	150 µg/L	e
Arsenic ²	total	5 µg/L	a
Cadmium ¹	extractable, total	$e^{0.7852 \ln[\text{hardness}] - 2.715}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	f
Chloride ²	dissolved	150 mg/L	d
Copper ¹	extractable, total	$e^{0.8545 \ln[\text{hardness}] - 1.702 * 0.96}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	b
Copper ²	total	2 µg/L for hardness < 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L $e^{0.8545 \ln[\text{hardness}] - 1.465 * 0.2}$ µg/L for hardness > 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	d
Iron ¹	total	0.3 mg/L	d
Lead	extractable, total	$e^{1.273 \ln[\text{hardness}] - 4.705}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	d
MCPA		2.6 µg/L	a
Nickel ¹	extractable, total	$e^{0.8460 \ln[\text{hardness}] + 0.0584 * 0.997}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	e
Nitrate ¹	total dissolved	2.9 mg N/L	d
Nickel ²	total	$< e^{0.76 \ln[\text{hardness}] + 1.06}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	d
Nitrogen ²	total	1 mg N/L	h
Oxygen ¹	dissolved	5 mg/L	e
Oxygen ²	dissolved	6.5 mg/L	a
pH		between 6.5 and 9	a
Phosphorus	total	0.05 mg/L	b g
Suspended sediments ¹	total	Maximum increase of 25 mg/L for high flow and turbid waters above background levels	d
Zinc ¹	total	$< e^{0.8473 \ln[\text{hardness}] + 0.8848 * 0.986}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	b f
Zinc ²	total	7.5 µg/L for hardness ≤ 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L 7.5 + 0.75*(hardness-90) for hardness > 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	d

¹ Applies to stations monitored under provincial monitoring programs.

² Applies to stations monitored under federal monitoring programs (Prairie Provinces Water Board).

Manitoba - Sources:

- a Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2007) Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life: Summary table, Update 7.1. Retrieved on 21 September 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/publications/ceqg_rcqe.html?category_id=124)
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New Brunswick

Parameter	Form	Guideline	Source
Ammonia	un-ionized	19 µg/L	a
Arsenic	total	5 µg/L	b
Chloride	total	150 mg/L	a
Copper	total	2 µg/L for hardness < 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L $e^{0.8545 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 1.465} \cdot 0.2$ µg/L for hardness > 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	a
Iron	total	0.3 mg/L	a
Nitrate	total	2.9 mg N/L	a
Oxygen	dissolved	6.5 mg/L	b
pH		between 6.5 and 9	b
Phosphorus	total	0.03 mg/L	a
Turbidity		10 NTU (SSG ¹)	b
Zinc	total	7.5 µg/L for hardness ≤ 90 mg/L $7.5 + 0.75 \cdot (\text{hardness} - 90)$ for hardness > 90 mg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	a

¹ SSG denotes different station-specific guidelines or formulas were used at stations. Specific station information is available upon request.

New Brunswick - Sources:

- a Government of Canada (2008) Technical guidance document for water quality index practitioners reporting under the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators (CESI) initiative. Environment Canada and Statistics Canada. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=FCE44CD8-A2C6-4659-8CC8-EFEAD92EF1F0>)
- b Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2007) Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life: Summary table, Update 7.1. Retrieved on 21 September 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/publications/ceqg_rcqe.html?category_id=124)

Newfoundland and Labrador

Parameter	Form	Guideline	Source
Chloride	dissolved	150 mg/L	a
Copper	total	2 µg/L for hardness < 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L $e^{0.8545 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 1.465 \cdot 0.2}$ for hardness > 90 mg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	a
Iron	total	SSG ³	a b
Lead	total	$e^{1.273 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 4.705}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	a
Nickel	total	$e^{0.76[\ln(\text{hardness})] + 1.06}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	a
Nitrate	total dissolved	2.9 mg N/L	a
Oxygen	dissolved	9.5 mg/L	c
pH		SSG ³	b c
Phosphorus	total	0.03 mg/L	a
Zinc	total	7.5 µg/L for hardness ≤ 90 mg/L 7.5 + 0.75*(hardness-90) for hardness > 90 mg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	a

³ SSG denotes different station-specific guidelines or formulas were used at stations. Specific station information is available upon request.

Newfoundland and Labrador - Sources:

- a Government of Canada (2008) Technical guidance document for water quality index practitioners reporting under the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators (CESI) initiative. Environment Canada and Statistics Canada. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=FCE44CD8-A2C6-4659-8CC8-EFEAD92EF1F0>)
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Northwest Territories

Parameter	Form	Guideline	Source
Ammonia	un-ionized, dissolved	Lentic-lotic stations: 19 µg/L	a
		Lotic stations: SSG ¹ (mean + 2 standard deviation)	b
Arsenic	total	5 µg/L	c
Chloride	dissolved	Lentic-lotic stations: 150 mg/L	a
		Lotic stations: SSG ¹ (mean + 2 standard deviation)	b
Copper	total	Lentic-lotic stations:	a
		2 µg/L for hardness < 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L $e^{0.8545 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 1.465 \cdot 0.2}$ for hardness > 90 mg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L Lotic stations: SSG ¹ (mean + 2 standard deviation)	b
Iron	total	Lentic-lotic stations: 0.3 mg/L	a
		Lotic stations: SSG ¹ (mean + 2 standard deviation)	b
Lead	total	Lentic-lotic stations: $e^{1.273 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 4.705}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	a
		Lotic stations: SSG ¹ (mean + 2 standard deviation)	b
Nitrate and nitrite	total dissolved	Lentic-lotic stations: 2.93 mg N/L	a
		Lotic stations: SSG ¹ (mean + 2 standard deviation)	b
Nitrite	dissolved	SSG ¹ (mean + 2 standard deviation)	
Oxygen	dissolved	5 mg/L	c
pH		Lentic-lotic stations: between 6.5 and 9	b
		Lotic stations: SSG ¹ (mean + 2 standard deviation)	c
Phosphorus	total	Lentic-lotic stations: 0.03 mg/L	a
		Lotic stations: SSG ¹ (mean + 2 standard deviation)	c
Zinc	total	Lentic-lotic stations: 30 µg/L	b
		Lotic stations: SSG ¹ (mean + 2 standard deviation)	c

¹ SSG denotes different station-specific guidelines or formulas were used at stations. Specific station information is available upon request.

Northwest Territories - Sources:

- a Government of Canada (2008) Technical guidance document for water quality index practitioners reporting under the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators (CESI) initiative. Environment Canada and Statistics Canada. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=FCE44CD8-A2C6-4659-8CC8-EFEAD92EF1F0>)

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- c Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2007) Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life: Summary table, Update 7.1. Retrieved on 21 September 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/publications/ceqg_rcqe.html?category_id=124)

Nova Scotia

Parameter	Form	Guideline	Source
Chloride	total	150 mg/L	a
Copper	extractable	$2 \mu\text{g/L}$ for hardness $< 90 \text{ mg } [\text{CaCO}_3]/\text{L}$ $e^{0.8545 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 1.465 \cdot 0.2}$ for hardness > 90 mg/L where hardness as $\text{mg } [\text{CaCO}_3]/\text{L}$	a
Iron	extractable	0.3 mg/L	a
Lead	extractable	$e^{1.273 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 4.705} \mu\text{g/L}$ where hardness as $\text{mg } [\text{CaCO}_3]/\text{L}$	a
Nickel	total	$e^{0.76[\ln(\text{hardness})] + 1.06} \mu\text{g/L}$ where hardness as $\text{mg } [\text{CaCO}_3]/\text{L}$	a
Nitrate	dissolved	2.9 mg N/L	a
Oxygen	dissolved	6.5 mg/L	b
pH		between 6.5 and 9	b
Phosphorus	total	0.02 mg/L	a
Zinc	extractable	$7.5 \mu\text{g/L}$ for hardness $\leq 90 \text{ mg/L}$ $7.5 + 0.75 \cdot (\text{hardness} - 90)$ for hardness $> 90 \text{ mg/L}$ where hardness as $\text{mg } [\text{CaCO}_3]/\text{L}$	a

Nova Scotia - Sources:

- a Government of Canada (2008) Technical guidance document for water quality index practitioners reporting under the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators (CESI) initiative. Environment Canada and Statistics Canada. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=FCE44CD8-A2C6-4659-8CC8-EFEAD92EF1F0>)
- b Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2007) Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life: Summary table, Update 7.1. Retrieved on 21 September 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/publications/ceqg_rcqe.html?category_id=124)

Ontario

Parameter	Form	Guideline	Source
Ammonia	un-ionized	19 µg/L	a b
Chloride	total	150 mg/L	b
Chromium	total	2 µg/L guideline for Cr(VI) adjusted to total chromium	a
Nickel	total	$e^{0.76 \ln[\text{hardness}] + 1.06}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	b
Nitrate	total dissolved	2.93 mg N/L	b
Phosphorus	total	0.03 mg/L	b c
Zinc	total	7.5 µg/L for hardness ≤ 90 mg/L 7.5 + 0.75*(hardness-90) for hardness > 90 mg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	b

Ontario - Sources:

- a Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2007) Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life: Summary table, Update 7.1. Retrieved on 21 September 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/publications/ceqg_rcqe.html?category_id=124)
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- c Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Energy (1994) Water management policies, guidelines, provincial water quality objectives. Retrieved on 22 September 2011. (http://www.env.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsumer/groups/lr/@ene/@resources/documents/resource/std01_079681.pdf)

Prince Edward Island

Parameter	Form	Guideline	Source
Nitrate	total dissolved	2.9 mg N/L	a
Oxygen	dissolved	6.5 mg/L	b
pH		between 6.5 and 9	b
Phosphorus	total	0.03 mg/L SSG ¹	a
Suspended sediments	total	29 mg/L (SSG ³)	b

¹ SSG denotes different station-specific guidelines or formulas were used at stations. Specific station information is available upon request.

Prince Edward Island - Sources:

- a Government of Canada (2008) Technical guidance document for water quality index practitioners reporting under the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators (CESI) initiative. Environment Canada and Statistics Canada. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=FCE44CD8-A2C6-4659-8CC8-EFEAD92EF1F0>)
- b Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2007) Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life: Summary table, Update 7.1. Retrieved on 21 September 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/publications/ceqg_rcqe.html?category_id=124)

Quebec

Parameter	Form	Guideline	Source
Ammonia	dissolved	0.05 mg/L	a b
Atrazine ¹		1.8 µg/L	c
Bentazone ¹		0.51 mg/L	a
Chlorophyll a		8 mg/L	d
Copper ¹	extractable	2 µg/L for hardness < 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L $e^{0.8545 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 1.465 \cdot 0.2}$ for hardness > 90 mg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	d
Dicamba ¹		10 µg/L	c
Metolachlor ¹	Metolachlor ²	7.8 µg/L	c
Nickel ¹	total	$e^{0.76[\ln(\text{hardness})] + 1.06}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	d
Nitrate and nitrite	total dissolved	2.93 mg N/L	c d
pH		between 6.5 and 9	a c
Phosphorus	total	0.03 mg/L	a
Turbidity		10 NTU	d
Zinc ¹	total	7.5 µg/L for hardness ≤ 90 mg/L 7.5 + 0.75* (hardness-90) for hardness > 90 mg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	d

¹ Only applies to stations monitored under federal monitoring programs

Quebec - Sources:

- a Ministère du Développement durable, Environnement et Parcs (2009) Critères de qualité de l'eau de surface. Retrieved on 27 September 2011. (http://www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/eau/criteres_eau/index.asp)
- b Nordin, R.N., Pommen, L.W. (2001) Water quality criteria for nitrogen (nitrate, nitrite, and ammonia): Overview report. British Columbia Ministry of the Environment and Parks. Retrieved on 27 September 2011. (<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/BCguidelines/nitrogen/nitrogen.html>)
- c Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2007) Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life: Summary table, Update 7.1. Retrieved on 21 September 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/publications/ceqg_rcqe.html?category_id=124)
- d Government of Canada (2008) Technical guidance document for water quality index practitioners reporting under the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators (CESI) initiative. Environment Canada and Statistics Canada. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=FCE44CD8-A2C6-4659-8CC8-EFEAD92EF1F0>)

Saskatchewan

Parameter	Form	Guideline	Source
2,4-D		4 µg/L	a
Ammonia	un-ionized	19 µg/L	b
Arsenic	total	5 µg/L	a
Chloride	dissolved	150 mg/L	b
Copper	total	2 µg/L for hardness < 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L $e^{0.8545 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 1.465 \cdot 0.2}$ µg/L for hardness > 90 mg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	b
Lead	total	$e^{1.273 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 4.705}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	b
MCPA		2.6 µg/L	a
Nickel	total	$e^{0.76 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] + 1.06}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	b
Nitrogen	total	1 mg N/L	c
Oxygen	dissolved	6.5 mg/L	a
pH		between 6.5 and 9	a
Phosphorus	total	0.05 mg/L	c d
Zinc	total	7.5 µg/L for hardness ≤ 90 mg/L 7.5 + 0.75*(hardness-90) for hardness > 90 mg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	b

Saskatchewan - Sources:

- a Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2007) Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life: Summary table, Update 7.1. Retrieved on 21 September 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/publications/ceqg_rcqe.html?category_id=124)
- b Government of Canada (2008) Technical guidance document for water quality index practitioners reporting under the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators (CESI) initiative. Environment Canada and Statistics Canada. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=FCE44CD8-A2C6-4659-8CC8-EFEAD92EF1F0>)
- c Alberta Environment (1999) Surface water quality guidelines for use in Alberta. Retrieved on 21 September 2011. (<http://environment.alberta.ca/01323.html>)
- d Prairie Provinces Water Board (1992) Master Agreement on Apportionment. Schedule E: Agreement on Water Quality. Retrieved on 3 August 2011. (<http://www.ppwb.ca/information/115/index.html>)

Yukon

Parameter	Form	Guideline	Source
Arsenic	total	5 µg/L	a
Chromium	total	SSG	b
Copper	total	2 µg/L for hardness < 90 mg [CaCO ₃]/L $e^{0.8545 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 1.465 \cdot 0.2}$ for hardness > 90 mg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	c
Lead	total	$e^{1.273 \cdot \ln[\text{hardness}] - 4.705}$ µg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	c
Nitrate	total dissolved	2.93 mg N/L	c
Nitrite	total	0.02 mg N/L	d
Nitrogen	dissolved	0.7 mg N/L	c
pH		between 6.5 and 9	a
Phosphorus	total	0.025 mg/L	c
Selenium	total	0.2 µg/L	c
Silver	total	0.05 µg/L for hardness < 100 mg/L 1.9 µg/L for hardness > 100 mg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	c
Temperature		SSG ¹	c
Zinc	total	7.5 µg/L for hardness ≤ 90 mg/L 7.5 + 0.75*(hardness-90) for hardness > 90 mg/L where hardness as mg [CaCO ₃]/L	c

¹ SSG denotes different station-specific guidelines or formulas were used at stations. Specific station information is available upon request.

Yukon - Sources:

- a Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (2007) Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life: Summary table, Update 7.1. Retrieved on 21 September 2011. (http://www.ccme.ca/publications/ceqg_rcqe.html?category_id=124)
- b Environment Canada (2005) Site-specific Water Quality Guidelines for the Liard River at Upper Crossing for the Purpose of National Reporting, Tri-Star Environmental Consulting. Retrieved on 22 September 2011.
- c Government of Canada (2008) Technical guidance document for water quality index practitioners reporting under the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators (CESI) initiative. Environment Canada and Statistics Canada. Retrieved on 13 May 2011. (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=FCE44CD8-A2C6-4659-8CC8-EFEAD92EF1F0>)
- d Nordin, R.N. and Pommen, L.W. (2001) Water quality criteria for nitrogen (nitrate, nitrite, and ammonia): Overview report. British Columbia Ministry of Environment and Parks. Retrieved on 27 September 2011.

(<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/BCguidelines/nitrogen/nitrogen.html>)