

Designated Best Uses of Water

Designated Best Use	Class	Criteria
Drinking Water Source without conventional treatment but after disinfection	A	1. Total Coliforms Organism MPN/100ml shall be 50 or less 2. pH between 6.5 and 8.5 3. Dissolved Oxygen 6mg/l or more 4. Biochemical Oxygen Demand 5 days 20 °C, 2mg/l or less
Outdoor bathing (Organised)	B	1. Total Coliforms Organism MPN/100ml shall be 500 or less 2. pH between 6.5 and 8.5 3. Dissolved Oxygen 5mg/l or more 4. Biochemical Oxygen Demand 5 days 20 °C, 3mg/l or less
Drinking water source after conventional treatment and disinfection	C	1. Total Coliforms Organism MPN/100ml shall be 5000 or less 2. pH between 6 and 9 3. Dissolved Oxygen 4mg/l or more 4. Biochemical Oxygen Demand 5 days 20 °C, 3mg/l or less
Propagation of Wild life and Fisheries	D	1. pH between 6.5 and 8.5 2. Dissolved Oxygen 4mg/l or more 3. Free Ammonia (as N) 4. Biochemical Oxygen Demand 5 days 20 °C, 2mg/l or less
Irrigation, Industrial Cooling, Controlled Waste disposal	E	1. pH between 6.0 and 8.5 2. Electrical Conductivity at 25 °C micro mhos/cm, maximum 2250 3. Sodium absorption Ratio Max. 26 4. Boron Max. 2mg/l
	Below-E	Not meeting any of the A, B, C, D & E criteria

Source: CPCB

In India, CPCB has identified water quality requirements in terms of a few chemical characteristics, known as primary water quality criteria. Further, Bureau of Indian Standards has also recommended water quality parameters for different uses in the standard IS 2296:1992.

Water Quality Standards in India (Source IS 2296:1992)

Characteristics	Designated best use				
	A	B	C	D	E
Dissolved Oxygen (DO)mg/l, min	6	5	4	4	-
Biochemical Oxygen demand (BOD)mg/l, max	2	3	3	-	-
Total coliform organisms MPN/100ml, max	50	500	5,000	-	-
pH value	6.5-8.5	6.5-8.5	6.0-9.0	6.5-8.5	6.0-8.5
Colour, Hazen units, max.	10	300	300	-	-
Odour	Un-objectionable			-	-
Taste	Tasteless	-	-	-	-
Total dissolved solids, mg/l, max.	500	-	1,500	-	2,100
Total hardness (as CaCO ₃), mg/l, max.	200	-	-	-	-
Calcium hardness (as CaCO ₃), mg/l, max.	200	-	-	-	-
Magnesium hardness (as CaCO ₃), mg/l, max.	200	-	-	-	-
Copper (as Cu), mg/l, max.	1.5	-	1.5	-	-
Iron (as Fe), mg/l, max.	0.3	-	0.5	-	-
Manganese (as Mn), mg/l, max.	0.5	-	-	-	-
Chlorides (as Cl), mg/l, max.	250	-	600	-	600
Sulphates (as SO ₄), mg/l, max.	400	-	400	-	1,000
Nitrates (as NO ₃), mg/l, max.	20	-	50	-	-
Fluorides (as F), mg/l, max.	1.5	1.5	1.5	-	-
Phenolic compounds (as C ₂ H ₅ OH), mg/l, max.	0.002	0.005	0.005	-	-
Mercury (as Hg), mg/l, max.	0.001	-	-	-	-
Cadmium (as Cd), mg/l, max.	0.01	-	0.01	-	-
Selenium (as Se), mg/l, max.	0.01	-	0.05	-	-
Arsenic (as As), mg/l, max.	0.05	0.2	0.2	-	-
Cyanide (as CN), mg/l, max.	0.05	0.05	0.05	-	-
Lead (as Pb), mg/l, max.	0.1	-	0.1	-	-
Zinc (as Zn), mg/l, max.	15	-	15	-	-
Chromium (as Cr ⁶⁺), mg/l, max.	0.05	-	0.05	-	-
Anionic detergents (as MBAS), mg/l, max.	0.2	1	1	-	-
Barium (as Ba), mg/l, max.	1	-	-	-	-
Free Ammonia (as N), mg/l, max	-	-	-	1.2	-
Electrical conductivity, micromhos/cm, max	-	-	-	-	2,250
Sodium absorption ratio, max	-	-	-	-	26
Boron, mg/l, max	-	-	-	-	2