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| **Glossary** |  |
| **Chapter 20** |  |
| **cultural eutrophication** | Overnourishment of aquatic ecosystems with plant nutrients (mostly nitrates and phosphates) because of human activities such as agriculture, urbanization, and discharges from industrial plants and sewage treatment plants. See eutrophication. |
| **dissolved oxygen (DO) content** | Amount of oxygen gas (O2) dissolved in a given volume of water at a particular temperature and pressure, often expressed as a concentration in parts of oxygen per million parts of water. |
| **eutrophication** | Physical, chemical, and biological changes that take place after a lake, estuary, or slow-flowing stream receives inputs of plant nutrients?mostly nitrates and phosphates?from natural erosion and runoff from the surrounding land basin. See cultural eutrophication. |
| **primary sewage treatment** | Mechanical sewage treatment in which large solids are filtered out by screens and suspended solids settle out as sludge in a sedimentation tank. Compare secondary sewage treatment. |
| **secondary sewage treatment** | Second step in most waste treatment systems in which aerobic bacteria decompose as much as 90% of degradable, oxygen-demanding organic wastes in wastewater. It usually involves bringing sewage and bacteria together in trickling filters or in the activated sludge process. Compare primary sewage treatment. |
| **septic tank** | Underground tank for treating wastewater from a home in rural and suburban areas. Bacteria in the tank decompose organic wastes, and the sludge settles to the bottom of the tank. The effluent flows out of the tank into the ground through a field of drainpipes. |
| **turbidity** | Cloudiness in a volume of water; a measure of water clarity in lakes, streams, and other bodies of water. |
| **water pollution** | Any physical or chemical change in surface water or groundwater that can harm living organisms or make water unfit for certain uses. |