

California Department of Public Health

Wastewater Surveillance

Common Acronyms to Know



Acronym	Full Name	Description
BCov	Bovine Coronavirus	Attenuated vaccine strain of a coronavirus affecting cattle that is used as a positive control in samples
CDPH Cal-SuWers Program	California Surveillance of Wastewaters Program	Includes the CDPH Drinking Water and Radiation Laboratory testing samples from participating utilities and the Wastewater Surveillance Epidemiology Team analyzing and reporting the data
CA WWS Network	California Wastewater Surveillance Network	Includes all California groups that monitor and contribute wastewater surveillance data
Cpg	Copies per gram	Copies of SARS-CoV-2 per gram (dry weight) of wastewater solids
CSS	Combined sewer system	A sewer system using one pipe to transport domestic sewage, stormwater runoff/rainfall, and industrial wastewater to a single wastewater treatment plant. Major rain events can dilute wastewater in combined sewer systems
DCIPHER	Data Collation and Integration for Public Health Event Response	National repository for submitting wastewater surveillance data from reporting jurisdictions (e.g., California) to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid	Double-stranded polymer carrying genetic code necessary for an organism to function
ELC	Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity	A CDC grant providing funding for public health surveillance, including wastewater surveillance
I&I	Infiltration and Inflow	Excess wastewater flowing into sewer pipes from either groundwater (infiltration) or stormwater (inflow)
LHJ	Local health jurisdiction	Includes 58 county health departments and 3 city health jurisdictions (Berkeley City, Long Beach City, and Pasadena City) in California
LOD	Limit of detection	The lowest detectable concentration of an analyte or target with a stated probability (from a sample, typically at 95% certainty)



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MGD	Million gallons per day	Unit of measurement for flow rate of wastewater
Mpox	Monkeypox	A zoonotic orthopoxvirus able to cause disease in humans with similar symptoms to smallpox, although less severe
NWSS	National Wastewater Surveillance System	A CDC program coordinating and building the nation’s capacity to track the presence of targets of public health concern in wastewater samples collected across the country
PMMoV	Pepper Mild Mottle Virus	A plant pathogen commonly found in pepper-based foods. PMMoV is one of the most abundantly excreted viruses found in human fecal samples and can be used as an indicator of human fecal strength
PCR	Polymerase chain reaction	A laboratory process of heating and cooling cycles amplifying or copying fragments of genetic material (DNA) into millions of copies of a particular section of DNA Types of PCR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rt-PCR (reverse transcription PCR) • rt-qPCR (reverse transcription-quantitative PCR) • dd-PCR (digital droplet PCR)
RNA	Ribonucleic acid	Single-stranded molecule acting as a messenger to translate DNA into necessary proteins
RSV	Respiratory syncytial virus	A common respiratory virus causing mild cold-like symptoms, affecting the lungs and breathing passages. However, RSV can cause serious complications in very young children (<1 year or age), older adults with chronic medical conditions, and the immunocompromised population
SCAN	Sewage Coronavirus Alert Network	Project monitoring of diseases through municipal wastewater based out of Stanford University in collaboration with Emory University, with implementation partner Verily Life Sciences
WEF	Water Environment Foundation	A not-for-profit technical and educational organization with members representing water quality professionals around the world
WWS and WBE	Wastewater Surveillance and Wastewater-Based Epidemiology	Wastewater surveillance, also known as wastewater-based epidemiology, is a public health tool that seeks to understand the presence and amounts of targets of public health concern in sewage to provide information on the overall health of a community

