

Notices

This document has been developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III Chesapeake Bay Program Office, with the assistance and support of the EPA Region III Water Protection Division, EPA Region II, EPA Headquarters Office of Water and Office of Research and Development, the states of Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York and West Virginia and the District of Columbia.

The goal of the Clean Water Act is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the nation's waters and, where attainable, to achieve water quality that provides for the protection and propagation of fish, shellfish and wildlife and recreation in and on the water. As a means of meeting this goal, the Clean Water Act requires states and authorized tribes to establish water quality criteria to protect designated uses. This document provides regional technical guidance and recommendations to states, authorized tribes and other authorized jurisdictions to develop water quality criteria and water quality standards under the Clean Water Act to protect against the adverse effects of nutrient and sediment over-enrichment in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributary waters.

States and tribal decision-makers retain the discretion to adopt approaches that differ from this regional guidance on a case-by-case basis when appropriate and scientifically defensible, consistent with the Clean Water Act. While this document contains the EPA's scientific findings and policy recommendations regarding ambient concentrations of dissolved oxygen, water clarity and chlorophyll *a* that protect Chesapeake Bay estuarine aquatic resources, it is not a substitute for the Clean Water Act or EPA regulations; nor is it a regulation. Thus, it cannot impose legally binding requirements on the EPA, states, authorized tribes or the regulated community, and it may not apply to particular situations or circumstances. The EPA may change this regional guidance in the future.

This document is available to the public through the Internet at www.epa.gov/standards/nutrient.html or www.chesapeakebay.net/baycriteria.htm. Requests for the document should be sent to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Service Center for Environmental Publications, 11029 Kenwood Road, Building 5, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242 (513-489-8190) or by email (waterpubs@epa.gov). Please refer to EPA document number EPA 903-R-03-002.