

What is Turbidity?



Hudson River Estuary Program

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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY | EARTH INSTITUTE

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Turbidity tests measure how cloudy or clear the water is. Cloudiness does NOT always equal poor water quality or pollution. Water may be turbid because waves or currents stir up mud, or because rain washes sediment (dirt) off the land and into the water. Water may also be cloudy when there are large numbers of tiny plants and animals (phytoplankton and zooplankton) floating in it.

Why we measure turbidity...

To look at sediment load and water clarity throughout the river. Turbidity can affect the temperature of the water and the ability of underwater plants to make oxygen.

NOTE: Different turbidity tests give results in different units. Be sure to record units on your data sheet!

How to use a SMALL turbidity tube...

