

2026 Minnesota State Envirothon - Current Events Study Guide

What is Non-Point Source Pollution?

1. Differentiate non-point source pollution vs point source pollution
<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/point-source-and-nonpoint-sources-pollution/>
2. Identify at least three types of non-point source pollution
<https://www.in.gov/idem/nps/what-is-nonpoint-source-pollution/major-types-of-nonpoint-source-pollutants/>
3. Water cycle basics: <https://www.noaa.gov/education/resource-collections/freshwater/water-cycle>
4. Water pollution basics: <https://youtu.be/GNGKsubYJ9U?si=h5DbqAZHDFBHW235>
5. Why are shallow lakes particularly vulnerable to non-point source pollution and harmful algal blooms? <https://www.iisd.org/ela/blog/lakes-stratify-turn-explain-science-behind-phenomena/>
6. Agriculture is vital to Minnesota's economy. How does agriculture contribute to non-point source pollution? <https://www.epa.gov/nps/nonpoint-source-agriculture>

How does non-point source pollution impact Minnesota? Real life applications

1. Cultural and historical implications of declining water quality due to non-point source pollution: <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air-water-land-climate/protecting-wild-rice-waters>
2. How does the application of salt to roadways impact nearby waterbodies? How much road salt can impair 5 gallons of water?
<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/pollutants-and-contaminants/chloride>
3. Real world example of non-point source pollutions and impacts on human health and the environment: <https://www.mprnews.org/episode/2024/04/11/pfas-health-department-says-22-minnesota-water-systems-above-federal-limits>
4. Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) [video]:
<https://youtu.be/BHDt8ehAD80?si=lq82a4ulEJ6xCfp6>
5. Blue Green Algae [podcast]: <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2025/07/25/toxic-bluegreen-algae-thrive-as-minnesota-lakes-grow-warmer>

Mitigation Strategies and Best Management Practices (BMPs)

1. Urban and suburban BMPs:
https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/tutorial_pollution/015controlling.html
2. Call to action – how to get involved:
https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/tutorial_pollution/016youcando.html

3. Community efforts to clean up local waterbodies:
<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2018/04/23/cleaning-up-polluted-water>
4. Agriculture Case Study: <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2011/09/12/ground-level-water-farmersteps>
5. When making recommendations it is always important to get feedback by the community your work will impact. Explore alternative perspectives – opinion piece:
<https://apnews.com/general-news-a98860138e0142c0b8e3c57bb5e8e49b>