

## Hydrologic Unit Codes - ( HUC)

Revised 10/02

<u>Code</u>	<u>Official Name</u>	<u>General Description</u>
HUC - 2	REGION	Major land areas. The lower 48 states have 18 total, 1 additional each for Alaska, Hawaii, and the Caribbean. ( 21 Total in US) Called 1 <sup>st</sup> Level - or Watershed 1 <sup>st</sup> Level
HUC - 4	SUBREGION	Each Region has from 3 to 30 Subregions. The Missouri River Region has 30 Subregions. The lower 48 states have 204. ( 222 Total in US). Called 2 <sup>nd</sup> Level
HUC - 6	BASIN	Accounting Unit. ( 352 Total in US). Called 3 <sup>rd</sup> Level
HUC - 8	SUBBASIN	Cataloging Unit. The smallest is 448 K Acres (700 mi <sup>2</sup> ). Most are much larger. National HQ compilations have this as the smallest size unit. ( 2,149 Total in US) Called 4 <sup>th</sup> Level
HUC - 10	WATERSHED	Typically from 40 to 250 K Acres (62 to 390 mi <sup>2</sup> ) Work continues per new Interagency Guidelines presented to Federal Geographic Data Committee on December 2000. (Was formerly called HUC-11). Called 5 <sup>th</sup> Level or Watershed 5 <sup>th</sup> Level.
HUC - 12	SUBWATERSHED	Typically from 10 to 40 K Acres (15 to 62 mi <sup>2</sup> ) Work continues per new Interagency Guidelines presented to Federal Geographic Data Committee on December 2000. (Was formerly called HUC-14). Called 6 <sup>th</sup> Level or Watershed 6 <sup>th</sup> Level.

**HUC** is the acronym for Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC). Every hydrologic unit is identified by a unique HUC consisting of 2 to 12 digits based on the levels of classification in the hydrologic unit system. A **hydrologic unit** describes the area of land upstream from a specific point on the stream (generally the mouth or outlet) that contributes surface water runoff directly to this outlet point. Another term for this concept is drainage area. It is delineated by starting at a designated outlet point (usually the river mouth) and proceeding to follow the highest elevation of land that divides the direction of surface water flow (usually referred to as the ridge line). This boundary will follow the basin ridges until connected back at the outlet point. The continental divide is a well known ridge. For example - the Elkhorn River basin in NE, 6,953 square miles of surface drainage area from the river mouth with the Platte River to the surrounding land divides with other surrounding basins, is referred to as HUC 102200 (a six digit number, hence HUC- 6). This HUC-6 Elkhorn Basin is further subdivided into four Subbasins at the HUC-8 level: Upper Elkhorn Subbasin #10220001, North Fork Elkhorn Subbasin #10220002, Lower Elkhorn Subbasin #10220003 and the Logan Creek Subbasin #10220004. Nested within these Subbasins are nests of HUC-10 Watersheds and nested within them are HUC-12 Subwatersheds. The official Water Resources Council names are some times misused or forgotten. However, the federal interagency system is logical and conveys the hierarchical nature of the sizes and assemblages of typical natural hydrology.

	Numbers of HUCs Within:					
	Iowa	Kansas	Missouri	Nebraska	R7 (%US)	US
HUC - 2	2	2	4	1	4 (19%)	21 *
HUC - 4	9	13	13	13	33 (15%)	222 *
HUC - 6	11	15	17	14	42 (12%)	352 *
HUC - 8	55	90	67	69	246 (11%)	2150 *
HUC - 10						
HUC - 12						

\* - from <http://water.usgs.gov/nawqa/sparrow/wrr97/geograp/geograp.html>  
Other text and values are from NRCS Publication NI 170-304

Both the EPA R7 office and Clinton Lake near Lawrence are located in the Kansas River Basin HUC-102701, or more precisely, in the Lower Kansas River Subbasin HUC- 10270104.

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