
THE CLEAN WATER PROGRAM GUIDEBOOK SERIES

for

Prince George's County Municipalities

Building Effective Local Public Education
and Community Engagement Programs

Updated July 2019



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

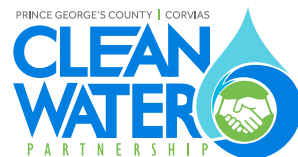
The *Clean Water Program Guidebook Series for Prince George's County's Municipalities: Building Effective Local Public Education and Community Engagement Programs* was developed by the Department of the Environment on behalf of all departments and agencies that participate in the *Clean Water Program*. We would like to extend a special thanks to all of the municipalities within Prince George's County that serve as a liaison between the public and governing bodies. We would also like to thank the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Region 3 for the direction they provided.

The *Clean Water Program* involves the participation of the following County departments and offices:

- ▶ Department of the Environment
- ▶ Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement
- ▶ Department of Public Works and Transportation
- ▶ Office of Central Services
- ▶ Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
- ▶ Office of Law
- ▶ Office of Information Technology
- ▶ Health Department
- ▶ Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department
- ▶ Soil Conservation District

We would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to the dedicated town and city staff that serve as the liaison to our communities and play a large role in educating the public on how to keep businesses and homes from contributing to polluted stormwater runoff. This guidebook was prepared with your municipality in mind, in order to strengthen your local programs and identify ways that we can work better and stronger together.

Thank you.



FOREWORD

Polluted stormwater runoff poses a significant threat to the health of Prince George's County's local waterways. Polluted runoff is generated by all of us. It is created when rainwater, snowmelt and water from our garden hoses falls onto hard surfaces that prevent it from soaking into the ground. Most often, this water picks up pollutants as it moves over and through the ground due to the many actions we collectively take each day. This includes activities such as applying pesticides, fertilizing our lawns, leaving pet waste on the ground and even driving our cars. Each action on its own may seem to have a relatively small impact on water quality, but collectively, the impact is huge.

Making small changes in our daily lives can significantly reduce the amount of pollutants we contribute to stormwater runoff. Changing behaviors in and around the home, at our places of business and elsewhere in our communities requires making a change from pollution-generating behaviors to pollution-preventing behaviors. That requires education, enlightenment and new attitudes. When people know, understand and change how they do things, polluted runoff problems can be solved.

It is because of this that public education and community engagement are vital components of any successful stormwater management plan and are one of the core components of the County's *Clean Water Program*. Building effective local public education and community engagement programs also helps us meet our obligations under the Federal Clean Water Act.

This guidebook was written for those municipalities that are required to incorporate public education and outreach and public involvement and participation into their local stormwater management programs. It offers guidance to help municipal staff maximize the effectiveness of their public education and engagement programs. Ensuring widespread public awareness and involvement is one of the most effective ways to improve our local environment, reduce polluted stormwater runoff, restore and protect our local waterways and, ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay. Doing so will help municipalities build on community capital (the wealth of interested citizens and groups) who help to spread the message of stormwater pollution prevention, to undertake group activities that highlight storm drain pollution and to contribute volunteer community actions to restore and protect local water resources.

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INTRODUCTION

Prince George's County's *Clean Water Program* facilitates County and municipal compliance with the Federal Clean Water Act. The program is broken into seven core components: Stormwater Management; Erosion and Sediment Control; Public Education and Community Engagement; Trash and Litter; Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination; Property Management and Maintenance; and Clean Water Restoration.

This guidebook is designed to help clarify and offer general direction on the municipality's role in addressing two of the core components:

- ▶ Public Education and Community Engagement
- ▶ Trash and Litter

This guidebook was written for Prince George's County's municipalities who are co-permittees under the County stormwater permit. It provides municipal leaders and staff with information on how to establish and implement an effective public education and community engagement program in your community.

This guidebook includes tips and ideas on how to build and grow your local program. It discusses how to tailor your program to local audiences and local issues (such as trash and litter) and emphasizes the importance of setting quantifiable, measurable goals. The guidebook also contains information on existing County programs and resources that are available to your community.

Building a strong public education and community engagement program will help your municipality address County stormwater permit requirements related to public outreach and involvement. A robust outreach and engagement program can positively impact many aspects of life in your community and help strengthen residents' relationships with local leaders and with one another.

Taking a collaborative approach to engage local residents, citizens and businesses enhances our collective ability to transform our streams into valuable assets and keep our waters clean.



Volunteers at a *Growing Green with Pride* cleanup event in Spring 2019.

BUILDING EFFECTIVE LOCAL PUBLIC EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Understanding the Issues and Requirements

Polluted stormwater runoff is a significant problem in Prince George's County. It impacts our streams and rivers, degrades our drinking water and places a great strain on our local economies.

Public education and community engagement programs play an essential role in reducing stormwater pollution. The daily activities of millions of people contribute significantly to polluted runoff. When water from rainstorms, melting snow or outdoor faucets runs off of hard surfaces such as buildings, driveways, yards and parking lots, it travels down the street and into the storm drain. Along the way it picks up contaminants such as fertilizer, pesticides, pet waste, litter and motor oil. From there, it flows into our waterways.

The need to address polluted stormwater runoff and change behaviors is real. Public education and community engagement are requirements of the Prince George's County's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems Discharge Permit (referred to as the County stormwater permit). With the exception of Bowie, all of the County's municipalities are covered under the County stormwater permit as "co-permittees." See *The Clean Water Program Guidebook on Understanding Roles and Responsibilities* to learn more.

Public Education and Community Engagement Requirements

A strong public education and community engagement program is one of the *Clean Water Program's* seven core components. As described in *The Clean Water Program Guidebook for Prince George's Municipalities: Roles and Responsibilities*, the *Clean Water Program* was established to facilitate compliance with the County's and municipalities' stormwater permits for those areas where the County owns and maintains the storm drain system and facilities.

Municipalities covered by the County stormwater permit should develop and implement a public education and outreach program and a public involvement and participation program. This requires municipalities to incorporate a variety of activities and actions. These include the following:

- ▶ Develop and implement a program to educate and engage community members on the importance of pollution prevention and ways to help keep our water clean while incorporating local issues and concerns.
- ▶ Achieve measurable improvements in the community's understanding of the problem and what can be done to solve it.
- ▶ Hold one or more volunteer environmental restoration activities or stream cleanups a year.
- ▶ Record activities in coordination with the County in order to report back to the State annually on progress.

Fast Fact.

Pollution limits were set on the amount of nitrogen, phosphorous and sediments that can enter the Chesapeake Bay watershed in 2010. The technical term for these pollution limits is Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs).

Trash and Litter Requirements

The Environmental Protection Agency established trash limits, or a trash TMDL, in 2010 to restrict the amount of trash entering the Anacostia River through the storm drain system. The County stormwater permit requires 170,268 pounds of trash to be removed from the watershed annually. Immediate action is not only pertinent for the County, but is also a municipal responsibility.

Twenty of the County's municipalities lie partly or completely within the Anacostia. These municipalities should, at a minimum, do the following to meet the requirements of the County stormwater permit:

- ▶ Incorporate trash and litter reduction education and awareness into local public education and community engagement activities.
- ▶ Record activities in coordination with the County in order to report back to the State annually on progress, preferably by using the *PGCLitterTRAK* app.

It is important for the County and municipalities to work together to establish a successful litter reduction program. The County can help municipalities in a variety of ways. This includes setting up a community education program to inform residents of the harmful effects of littering and provide them with options for recycling and waste disposal; helping municipalities host events such as an annual *Volunteer Neighborhood Cleanup* or *Growing Green with Pride* event; or organizing local groups to participate in the *Adopt-A-Stream* program. See *The Clean Water Program Guidebook on Understanding Roles and Responsibilities* to learn more.



The benefits of public education cannot be emphasized enough – even when it comes to government employees. The County's Second Nature Program helps ensure that the concept of sustainability becomes "second nature" to County employees and their respective agencies. Every Tuesday, County employees receive sustainable tips via the Department of the Environment's social media.



Fast Fact.

Nitrogen, phosphorous and sediments aren't the only pollutants of concern. Other enforceable limits, or TMDLs, exist for pollutants such as trash, bacteria, toxics and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs). It takes individual behavior change and proper practices to control such pollution.

Keys to a Successful Program

It All Starts with a Plan

Developing a public education and community engagement plan is an important first step to take for those communities who have not already done so. This plan is a valuable tool for guiding local activities that help meet your municipal responsibilities. It helps to customize education, outreach and engagement efforts to various audiences within your community.

Build on Existing Programs

If you have already established your own program, that's great. Keep in mind that your municipality is required to assess the effectiveness of these programs. Make sure to familiarize yourself with what the County has to offer. The *Clean Water Program* has established a variety of effective public education and community engagement programs to raise public awareness of the issues and keep businesses and homes from contributing to stormwater pollution.

Team Up with the County and Other Municipalities

The *Clean Water Program* encourages collaboration among all of the County's municipalities and communities. Together, we can develop and deliver consistent messages across boundaries, share access to media and stretch our resources further by sharing costs and staff times. The County also encourages collaboration with your neighbors that share audiences, geography, pollution problems or resources. There are plenty of entities out there to help along the way such as neighborhood groups, nonprofit organizations and civic organizations.

Evaluate Your Effectiveness

The County stormwater permit requires program effectiveness to be measured over time and that changes be implemented as needed. You'll need to gauge the public understanding of polluted stormwater runoff issues and the behaviors that lessen the impacts from polluted stormwater runoff. Some measures can tell you more than others. It's important to develop an evaluation process before implementing a public education and community engagement program.

HOW EFFECTIVE IS YOUR APPROACH?

- Good** Document project activities:
 - ★ Count the number of *Rain Check Rebate* Program brochures distributed to residents, businesses and other organizations.
- Better** Gauge awareness and attitudes:
 - ★★ Determine the percentage of homeowners who know that overapplying pesticides and fertilizers pollute waterways.
- Best** Evaluate behavior change:
 - ★★★ Determine the percentage of targeted businesses who keep dumpsters and other containers securely closed or store containers under cover in response to community campaigns.

PREPARE YOUR PLAN

What Should the Plan Cover?

- ▶ Planning sets the foundation for your public education and community engagement program. Your plan doesn't have to be lengthy – just thorough enough to help you:
- ▶ **Identify specific goals** such as litter prevention, tree planting or improved/reduced fertilizer use.
- ▶ **Identify target audiences and objectives** for each such as residential, business or nonprofit groups with subcategories as needed.
- ▶ **Develop and refine messages and engagement or distribution tools** such as newsletters or social media posts encouraging residents to use fertilizers and pesticides responsibly.
- ▶ **Select appropriate methods of evaluation** such as determining the number of residents that apply for the *Rain Check Rebate* Program.

Did you know?

The County stormwater permit is a good place to start when preparing your plan. The permit's appendices B and C provide guidance for appropriate best management practices and measurable goals, respectively.

What Are Your Goals?

- ▶ Identifying the issues most significant to your community and the goals you expect to achieve through your public education and community engagement efforts will help target resources. Start by identifying the major pollutants and sources of concern for your community, and then establish potential goals for each. Review

documents such as existing restoration or watershed plans, pollution reduction plans (for TMDLs) and community plans to help pinpoint issues within your area. Work with existing green teams and/or other groups to identify and prioritize water pollution issues.

- ▶ You may want to revisit and refine your goals even further once the audiences have been identified. For example, you may want to prioritize goals for homeowners (such as proper management and disposal of oils, grease and auto fluids) and commercial audiences (such as routine maintenance and disposal practices in the restaurant and hospitality industry).

SAMPLE EXERCISE: Identify Local Issues and Goals

Nutrients and Sediments

| Issues | Goal(s) |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Excess runoff to storm drains | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reduce/eliminate runoff ▶ Increase <i>Rain Check Rebate Program</i> participation |
| Improper/excess fertilizer use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Greener lawn care; reduced fertilization |

Oils, Grease and Auto Fluids

| Issues | Goal(s) |
|---|--|
| Auto maintenance/repair and oil and grease management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Proper management and disposal |

Trash and Litter

| Issues | Goal(s) |
|--|---|
| Illegal dumping and illicit discharges into storm drains | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reduce/eliminate waste into the Anacostia ▶ Increase recycling participation |

Other Pollutants (e.g., pathogens)

| Issues | Goal(s) |
|-------------------------|--|
| Pet waste left on lawns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Improve pet waste management |

Who is the Audience?

A solid understanding of community context is necessary to determine what behavior changes and actions to address and how best to convey information and engage stakeholders. Who makes up your community? Are citizens a certain age, marital status or income level? What languages do they speak? Where are they most likely to engage in polluting behaviors? What about businesses? Do your issues and goals differ based on the audience (e.g., residential versus commercial)? What type of communication is best? Consider whether a particular audience would benefit from a different or more targeted approach.



SAMPLE ACTIVITY: Brainstorm Objectives and Related Actions for Residential Audiences

Nutrients and Sediments

Objective: Encourage green lawn/landscape care

- Actions/Products/Strategies**
- ▶ Distribute information on natural lawn care
 - ▶ Create a green lawn care slogan/awareness campaign
 - ▶ Educate residents on the proper use of chemicals

Objective: Promote the Rain Check Rebate Program

- Actions/Products/Strategies**
- ▶ Distribute *Rain Check Rebate Program* information
 - ▶ Host *Rain Check Rebate Program* workshops

Objective: Establish a tree planting program

- Actions/Products/Strategies**
- ▶ Enact campaign on the importance of trees and connect with the County to host a workshop
 - ▶ Distribute information on the *Tree ReLEAF* and *Arbor Day Every Day* programs
 - ▶ Develop a tree advisory board
 - ▶ Cultivate a community forestry program
 - ▶ Apply for a *Tree ReLEAF* grant

Oils, Grease and Auto Fluids

Objective: Encourage conscientious car care

- Actions/Products/Strategies**
- ▶ Distribute brochures on car care and the environment
 - ▶ Provide outreach to youth groups encouraging eco-friendly car wash fundraising events

Trash and Litter

Objective: Reduce litter

- Actions/Products/Strategies**
- ▶ Distribute educational information on the harm litter causes when it remains in the water
 - ▶ Plan regular stream and street litter cleanup events
 - ▶ Connect with the County to host a storm drain stenciling event

Other Pollutants (e.g., pathogens)

Objective: Encourage pet waste management

- Actions/Products/Strategies**
- ▶ Implement a pet waste educational program
 - ▶ Establish pet waste stations in targeted locations and provide outreach

What are the Objectives and Strategies?

Refine your goals once audiences are defined to identify specific objectives for each group you intend to engage and the different steps it will take to ensure a greater awareness of the issues and move individuals to take action. Start by brainstorming a list of potential objectives and related actions/products for various audiences that will help your municipality reach its intended goals. Consider what each audience needs to know to make an impact. Should property owners retrofit their property to reduce stormwater runoff? Do pet owners need to clean up after their dogs? Do local restaurants dispose of grease properly? Do you want landscaping companies to more selectively apply pesticides or fertilizers? Is there a need for training?

Attitude surveys, public meetings and listening sessions can all be helpful in determining how best

to connect clean water to the things that matter to your audience. Stakeholder forums or dialogues with watershed organizations or a local green team can provide important insight from seasoned practitioners who have worked with these audiences in your community for some time. These groups can be valuable, effective partners for sharing messages and encouraging action.

Agree upon an appropriate timeline to guide implementation and measure effectiveness once your group has identified and refined a list of strategies. Create a timeline that is consistent with the time frame of the County stormwater permit. In the exercise below, the goal of increasing lawn and landscape care practices is revisited and objectives are established for residential and commercial audiences over a five-year time frame.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY: Refine Objectives and Strategies and Establish an Implementation Timeline to Increase Awareness of the Impacts of Fertilizer and Encourage Green Lawn Care Practices

Audience: Residential

Objective: Increase the number of residents who fertilize less and follow environmentally safe landscaping practices

Actions/Products/Strategies

- ▶ Rain Check Rebate Program campaign [Years 1-5: Distribute brochures and conduct County workshops]
- ▶ Residential storm drain markings [Year 1: Develop & Implement; Years 2-5: Implement]
- ▶ Educational information on the Maryland Lawn Fertilizer Law via the web and newsletters [Year 1: Develop & Implement; Years 2-5: Implement]
- ▶ Interpretive signage where fertilizers are sold [Year 2: Develop; Year 3: Pilot; Year 4-5: Store Feedback]
- ▶ Green lawn care slogan/awareness campaign [Year 3: Develop; Years 4-5: Implement]

Audience: Commercial (Lawn care professionals, golf courses and other businesses)

Objective: Increase the number of businesses that follow environmentally safe landscaping practices

Actions/Products/Strategies

- ▶ Rain Check Rebate Program and Alternative Compliance Program campaigns [Years 1-5: Distribute information and establish demonstrations]
- ▶ Education on the Maryland Lawn Fertilizer Law and lawn care professionals certification requirements via the web and newsletters [Year 1: Develop & Implement; Years 2-5: Implement]
- ▶ Outreach to commercial property owners, golf course owners and other non-residential owners of land with large areas of turf [Year 2: Develop; Year 3: Develop & Implement; Years 4-5: Implement]
- ▶ Interpretive signage where fertilizers are sold [Year 2: Develop; Year 3: Pilot; Years 4-5: Store Feedback]

Did it Work?

Determine how to define the success of your outreach and engagement efforts before they start. Understanding the extent of the program's impact will help to evaluate those efforts to decide which activities to continue and which might need retooling.

Each activity in your plan may require its own metric. The most useful metrics provide real insight as to the impact of an activity. Consider what change(s) you would expect people to experience as a result of your program. For educational activities, consider what you think someone should know after encountering the program. For activities that are intended to change behaviors, consider what behavioral changes a participant would be more or less likely to adopt.

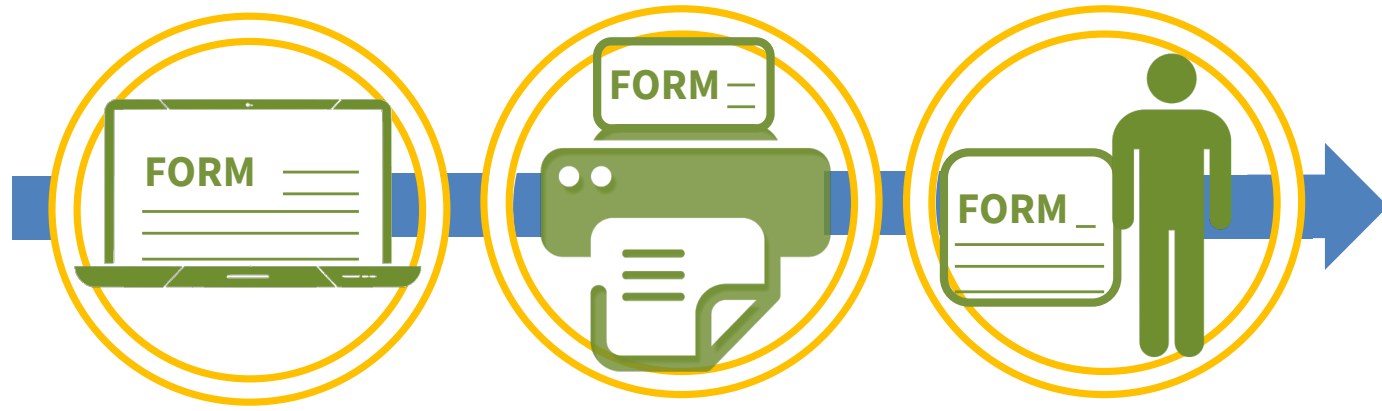
Think about how to collect information. Determine if direct feedback in the form of focus groups, community meetings, participant surveys/evaluation forms, or community surveys is feasible. In some cases, it may be helpful to collect data at a higher level, such as using reporting forms that ask for program-level information such as school recycling volumes, County waste records or workshop registration forms. Keep lists or databases with information about the people or groups who came into contact with the program. Keep detailed records to help with short- and long-term program evaluation. This may include the times and dates of events held, attendance records, and amounts and methods of materials distributed.

SAMPLE PLAN MATRIX: Year One Strategies – Residential Audiences

GOAL: Increase awareness of residential runoff from lawn care practices and encourage behaviors that reduce pollution in local waters

Objective: Encourage green lawn/landscape care

| Actions/Products/Strategies | Measurable Indicators | Time Frame (Month/Date) | Responsible Parties | Necessary Resources | Status/Comments |
|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| Implement storm drain stenciling/inlet marking program to help residents make the connection between individual behaviors and healthy waters | Yearly: # of storm drains marked; # of residential door hangers left Year 5: Survey to evaluate effectiveness of outreach messages | Town and County to design volunteer storm drain marking and door hanger project (1/15) 1 st round of storm drain markings (5/15 – 8/1) | Public Works Director, Town Administrator and Green Team | Staff time: 40 hours Green Team: 50 hours Volunteers: 4 hours per volunteer per event | Public Works to identify optimal storm drains in residential areas; Town Administrator to coordinate with County; Green Team to coordinate volunteers |
| Adapt information from existing County brochure and Maryland's Lawn Fertilizer Law on fertilizer application to send through newsletters and via web | Yearly: # of newsletters sent; # of web hits before and after Year 5: Survey to evaluate effectiveness of outreach messages | Obtain County brochure (2/1) Refine text/information (2/15) Establish web link (3/1) Send newsletter in spring (4/1) and summer (8/15) | Green Team and Web Staff | Web Staff time: 25 hours Green Team: 40 hours | Town Administrator to see if this can be coordinated with the County or neighboring municipalities |



Recordkeeping and Reporting

All of the Prince George's municipalities covered under the County stormwater permit are required to keep records of program activities for the length of time the permit is active and for three years after. The permit requires permittees to submit annual narrative summaries. The same is true for those municipalities that must comply with additional stormwater permits. These include those with municipal public works yards that have Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs) and must report back on their stormwater pollution prevention activities as required by the most recent *Maryland General Permit for Discharges from Stormwater Associated with Industrial Activities*.

Annual reports are a good place to summarize and evaluate the results of your public education and community engagement program and to take stock of what is working and what is not. Data gathered throughout the year should be used to answer critical questions such as:

- ▶ What is the current status in meeting stormwater goals and stormwater permit requirements?
- ▶ What are the estimated load reductions and other benefits of best management practice(s) implementation?
- ▶ What are the operation and maintenance costs associated with program implementation?
- ▶ How do the costs of program implementation relate to water quality changes?
- ▶ What stormwater program changes are necessary to meet the stated goals?

This information is important to have available when the stormwater permit is renewed at the end of five years, as continuation of a stormwater permit typically requires each permittee to submit a summary of past stormwater management plan activities with the permit renewal application that describes how water quality goals are being achieved.

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS TO ACHIEVE GOALS

Identify Opportunities

Consider what opportunities exist to coordinate with the County or other interested municipalities before finalizing your plan. Partnerships have many advantages, including providing access to resources (such as staff), increasing effectiveness, efficiency and public influence, allowing for creativity and innovation and improving communication. The County has a number of established and growing programs designed to allow the County and its municipalities to meet their requirements under the Federal Clean Water Act.

Building partnerships within your community can help lend credibility to your effort and expand your audience when delivering messages or seeking funding. Green teams and watershed organizations are obvious resources, but consider engaging other partners who are not as directly associated with environmental issues. Civic and religious organizations, youth groups, neighborhood associations, business groups, educational entities and media outlets can all be effective partners.

Connect with the County

Clean Water, Clear Choices Program

The *Clean Water, Clear Choices* Program is a series of hands on, do-it-yourself classes and workshops that increase residents' knowledge of best management practices. Participants learn how to manage and reduce stormwater pollution around the home and receive information on seven best management practices for reducing polluted runoff. These include rain barrels, rain gardens, pavement removal, urban tree canopy, cisterns, permeable pavement and green roofs.

In September 2014, the Department of the Environment and the City of Mount Rainier hosted the first ever two-hour program event at the Mount Rainier Nature Center. Participants learned how to manage and reduce stormwater pollution around their homes. Contact the Department of the Environment to see about hosting a *Clean Water, Clear Choices* workshop or class in your community.

Rain Check Rebate Program

The *Rain Check Rebate* Program provides property owners with rebates for installing approved stormwater management practices like rain gardens, rain barrels, permeable pavement and trees. Eligible property owners can include homeowners, businesses and nonprofit entities (including housing cooperatives and churches). The County has a variety of materials that your community can use to raise awareness and increase participation in the *Rain Check Rebate* Program. Contact the Department of the Environment for more information.

Alternative Compliance Program

The County's *Alternative Compliance Program* allows tax-exempt religious and nonprofit organizations to receive reductions to their Clean Water Act fee by implementing one or more activities. These include the following:

- ▶ Allow the County to install best management practices on their property.
- ▶ Agree to take part in specific outreach and education efforts to encourage others to change behaviors and implement best management practices on their own.
- ▶ Implement specific sustainable good housekeeping techniques.

The County has identified hundreds of potential facilities that may be eligible for this program, has received numerous applications and is actively working with current applicants to implement sustainable practices on their properties. Contact the Department of the Environment for information on how to engage tax-exempt religious and nonprofit organizations in your community.

Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program

The *Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program* was created in 2014 to encourage on-the-ground restoration activities that reduce nutrient and sediment pollution and increase community education activities. Its purpose is to engage Prince George's County neighborhoods, faith-based organizations, nonprofits and residents in the restoration and protection of local rivers, streams, parks and other natural resources. The program is a partnership between the Department of the Environment and the Chesapeake Bay Trust. Contact the Department of the Environment or visit the Chesapeake Bay Trust website for information on how and when to apply.



Installation of a Bandalong Litter Trap in Mount Rainier, MD in 2018 was funded by a Stormwater Stewardship Grant and made possible by many community partnerships.

Tree Planting Funding and Assistance

Several programs exist to provide communities with technical assistance and/or funding for tree planting. The Department of the Environment's *Tree ReLEAF* Grant Program provides funds to community groups (up to \$5,000) and municipalities (up to \$10,000) for planting native trees and shrubs in public or private common areas. The *Arbor Day Every Day* (ADED) program provides funding and assistance for tree planting projects on school property.

Growing Green with Pride and Right Tree, Right Place Programs

The Department of Public Works and Transportation oversees volunteer tree plantings in public spaces in the spring and fall of each year. Through its *Growing Green with Pride* program, thousands of trees are planted and tons of litter are collected annually. The



Tree ReLEAF kickoff in College Park, MD - May 29, 2014. The City was one of the first municipalities to participate in the County grant program.



A voluntary storm drain stenciling/inlet marking project reminds members of your community that nothing but rainwater should enter the storm drains.

County provides planning and design assistance for community plantings to support the County's goal of increasing its urban tree canopy. The County's *Right Tree, Right Place* program replaces diseased, dying and/or hazardous street trees with trees that are more likely to thrive in a street tree environment.

Volunteer Neighborhood Cleanup Program

Many of the municipalities in Prince George's County already organize/participate in stream cleanup events and litter campaigns on an annual basis. The Department of the Environment can help neighborhood groups, local businesses and nonprofits to coordinate their community-sponsored neighborhood and stream cleanups.

Volunteer Storm Drain Stenciling Program

Storm drain stenciling/inlet marking with the "Don't Dump - Chesapeake Bay Drainage" message helps raise community awareness and alert community members of the connection between storm drains and the Chesapeake Bay. While new development projects are required to stencil or mark storm drains, the County's program is intended to reach citizens in older communities (i.e., communities built before stormwater regulations went into effect). The County can help your municipality design a storm drain stenciling/inlet marking project that can be accomplished with any size team or age group. Storm drain stenciling/inlet marking on all municipal property is a great starting point to increasing community awareness. Contact the Department of the Environment to learn more.

Adopt-A-Stream Program

The Prince George's County *Adopt-A-Stream* program encourages residents, businesses, civic organizations and academic institutions to adopt a stream. There are many benefits to adopting a stream segment including enhancing the aesthetics of our natural resources, removing pollutants and improving habitat and water quality for aquatic plants and animals. *Adopt-A-Stream* groups can also survey their stream section and notify the Department of the Environment of pollution and illegal dumping.

Clean Sweep Initiative

Clean Sweep is a coordinated inter-agency led effort to clean up communities in the Anacostia River Watershed and other identified areas that will contribute to the achievement of County's trash reduction goals.

Scoop that Poop Campaign

Department of the Environment's countywide pet waste management program encourages and engages pet owners to clean up after their pets through educational materials and installation of pet waste stations in cooperation with County municipalities and community groups. Through the *Clean Water, Clear Choices* program, COPE provides workshops, outreach materials and interactive tabling to raise awareness about the benefits of proper pet waste management and encourage use of installed pet waste stations.

Connect with Other Municipalities

Your municipality may also be able to strengthen its program and reduce implementation costs by collaborating with neighboring municipalities with similar issues and goals.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Sustainability Division

The Sustainability Division develops and implements programs that protect and enhance quality of life and natural resources in Prince George's County. The Division's focus areas include air quality, flood management, litter reduction, tree planting, and community outreach and engagement programs. Contact the Sustainability Division at 301-883-6211 or visit <https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/335/Sustainability>.

- Arbor Day Every Day
- Tree ReLEAF
- Tree Planting Demonstrations and Technical Assistance
- Scoop that Poop Campaign (Pet Waste Management)
- Clean Water, Clear Choices
- Slam Dunk the Junk
- Adopt-A-Stream
- Clean Sweep Initiative
- Volunteer Storm Drain Stenciling
- Volunteer Neighborhood Cleanup

Stormwater Management Division

The Stormwater Management Division oversees the implementation of the NPDES MS4 Permit, the design and implementation of capital projects, and several Countywide programs. Unless otherwise specified, contact the Stormwater Management Division at 301-883-5833 or visit <https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/261/Stormwater-Management>.

- Alternative Compliance
- Rain Check Rebate
- Stormwater Stewardship Grants
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION

Contact the Department of Public Works and Transportation at 301-883-5600 or visit <https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/2774/Community-Enhancement> for information on the following programs:

- Growing Green with Pride
- Right Tree, Right Place

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Best Management Practice – A structural or non-structural device designed to temporarily store or treat urban stormwater runoff in order to help protect receiving water quality and control stormwater quantity and provide other amenities.

Cistern – A cistern is a sealed tank used to collect and store rainwater that flows from a rooftop for exterior uses, such as landscape irrigation and car washing. Cisterns are generally larger than rain barrels and can collect water from multiple downspouts. Their capacity ranges from 100 gallons to several thousand gallons. Capturing rainwater in a cistern is one of seven projects eligible for a rebate under the County's [Rain Check Rebate Program](#).

Clean Water Act – The Federal environmental law governing water pollution. The law regulates the discharge of pollutants into the nation's surface waters, including streams, lakes, rivers, wetlands, and coastal areas. ([See EPA resources and the text of the law](#)).

Green Roof – A green roof is a low-maintenance, vegetated roof system that stores rainwater in a lightweight, engineered soil. The stored water is taken up by the plants on the rooftop and released back into the atmosphere through evaporation. As a result, compared to a conventional rooftop of the same area, much less water runs off of a green roof. Installing a green roof is one of seven projects eligible for a rebate under the County's [Rain Check Rebate Program](#).

Illicit Discharge – Any discharge to a nearby storm drainage system that is not composed entirely of stormwater, except for discharges allowed under a NPDES permit or waters used for certain emergency situations. Phase II MS4s are required to develop a program to detect and eliminate these illicit discharges. This primarily includes developing a

storm sewer system map, an ordinance prohibiting illicit discharges, a plan to detect and address these illicit discharges and an education program on the hazards associated with illicit discharges.

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) – The system of storm drains, gutters, pipes, streams or ditches used to carry surface and stormwater from surrounding lands to local waterways. These can be owned and operated by a state, city, town, borough, county, parish, district, association or other public body.

Minimum Control Measures – This refers to the six measures that Phase II NPDES permittees are required to implement to reduce stormwater pollution. These include: public education and outreach; public involvement and participation; illicit discharge detection and elimination; construction site runoff control; post-construction runoff control; and pollution prevention and good housekeeping.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) – The portion of the Clean Water Act which requires point source dischargers to obtain permits (see [Section 402 of the Clean Water Act](#)). In the State of Maryland, these permits are administered by Maryland Department of the Environment.

Nutrient – A substance that provides food or nourishment, such as usable proteins, vitamins, minerals or carbohydrates. Fertilizers, particularly phosphorus and nitrogen, are the most common nutrients that contribute to the depletion of oxygen in water. Phosphorous and nitrogen are both pollutants of concern within Prince George's County and the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Pavement Removal – Pavement removal is the replacement of impervious surfaces, such as asphalt and concrete, with grass or native plants or with permeable pavement. Instead of seeping through the soil (infiltrating) and replenishing groundwater, rainfall that falls on driveways, sidewalks and other impervious surfaces rapidly accumulates in the form of stormwater runoff, which often contains pollutants (sediment, chemicals, pet waste, trash, etc.). Large spans of impervious areas are associated with increased stream bank erosion and decreased water quality. Removing impervious pavement is one of seven projects eligible for a rebate under the County's [Rain Check Rebate Program](#).

Permeable Pavement – Permeable pavement allows stormwater to slowly seep through (infiltrate), reaching the soil and replenishing the groundwater below the surface. A variety of permeable pavement materials are available. These include interlocking pavers, porous asphalt, pervious concrete and manufactured grass pavers. Interlocking pavers consist of precast blocks (primarily brick or concrete) that are aligned in such a way that water is able to pass through the void between successive blocks. Grass pavers are a type of open-cell paver made of concrete or plastic, in which the cells are filled with soil and planted with turf. Replacing impervious pavement with permeable pavement is one of seven projects eligible for a rebate under the County's [Rain Check Rebate Program](#).

Pollutants of Concern – A pollutant that is reasonably expected to be present in stormwater runoff based on the source and nature of the runoff, affecting the designated uses of the receiving water (as defined by the State of Maryland for Prince George's County). This includes pollutants where a TMDL has been developed and a waste load allocation (WLA) assigned.

Prince George's County's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems Discharge Permit – Also referred to as the "County stormwater permit." This NPDES Phase I permit was first issued to Prince George's County in 1993 and regulates the discharge of stormwater from the County's MS4 into waters of the United States. The County stormwater permit is reissued every five years. Each generation of stormwater permits has required increasingly more actions to be taken to reduce stormwater runoff. With the exception of Bowie, all of the County's municipalities are covered under the County stormwater permit as "co-permittees."

Rain Barrel – Rain barrels are containers used to collect a portion of the rainwater that flows from your rooftop. This water can be stored for uses such as watering your lawn or garden. Rain barrels are not for storing drinking water or water for use inside your home. Rain barrels reduce the amount of runoff and pollutants reaching local streams by capturing water from downspouts that would otherwise discharge onto a paved surface. Typical components of a rain barrel include a hose connection at the outlet, a screen trap to filter out downspout debris at the inlet and an overflow outlet. Capturing rainwater in a rain barrel is one of seven projects eligible for a rebate under the County's [Rain Check Rebate Program](#).

Rain Garden – A rain garden is a planted shallow depression that uses water-tolerant native plants and landscaping to soak up stormwater flowing from downspouts or hard (impervious) surfaces, such as your driveway, patio or sidewalk. Rain gardens allow water to slowly seep into the ground, reducing the amount of water that flows directly into the nearest storm drain, stream or river. Rain gardens typically consist of an absorbent soil mix, a mulch layer and plants such as shrubs, grasses and flowering plants. Installing a rain garden is one of seven projects eligible for a rebate under the County's [Rain Check Rebate Program](#).

State General Permit for Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems –

Also referred to as the "State general stormwater permit." This general NPDES Phase II permit covers discharges from approximately 60 designated cities and towns in Maryland with populations greater than 1,000.

Stormwater – The water that runs off surfaces such as rooftops, paved streets, highways and parking lots. It can also come from hard grassy surfaces such as lawns, playing fields, gravel roads and parking lots.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) – A TMDL is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards. Water quality standards identify the uses for each waterbody; for example, drinking water supply, contact recreation (swimming), aquatic life support (fishing) and the scientific criteria to support that use. Clean Water Act [Section 303](#) establishes the water quality standards and TMDL programs.

Urban Tree Canopy – The area of leaves and branches that create shade under the tree(s). Tree planting projects help to reduce stormwater runoff in urban areas. Tree leaves, branches, stems and roots catch falling rain, filter out pollutants and absorb stormwater. Planting a tree is one of seven projects eligible for a rebate under the County's [Rain Check Rebate Program](#).

Waterbody – Refers to any water designated as "Waters of the United States," including wetlands.

Watershed – The land area, or catchment, that contributes water to a specific waterbody. All the rain or snowmelt that falls within this area flows to the waterbodies as surface runoff in tributary streams or as groundwater.

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