

MS4 Program Plan

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAM PLAN

Stafford County, Virginia



Version 090501

Effective Date: May 1, 2019

CHAPTER 1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The 2018 Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (VPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Small MS4s (MS4 General Permit) became effective November 1, 2018. By applying for coverage under the MS4 General Permit, Stafford County (County) agreed to comply with its conditions and authorizations. These include the development, implementation and enforcement of an MS4 program that is designed to reduce the discharge of pollutants from the small MS4 to the maximum extent practicable (MEP) in accordance with the MS4 General Permit, to protect water quality and to satisfy the appropriate water quality requirements of the State Water Control Law and its attendant regulations. Among these requirements is the development and implementation of a Public Education and Outreach Program under Minimum Control Measure (MCM) # 1 designed to:

- Increase the public's knowledge of how to reduce stormwater pollution, placing priority on reducing impacts to impaired waters and other local water pollution concerns;
- Increase the public's knowledge of hazards associated with illegal discharges and improper disposal of waste, including pertinent legal implications; and
- Implement a diverse program with strategies that are targeted toward individuals or groups most likely to have significant stormwater impacts.

To address the MS4 General Permit requirements associated the Public Education and Outreach Program, the County's MS4 Program Plan committed the County to implementing BMP #1.1 – Implementation of the Stafford County Public Education and Outreach Program Plan (PEOP). The PEOP is designed to be utilized in conjunction with the County MS4 Program Plan for implementation of BMP #1.1 to comply with the MS4 General Permit.

CHAPTER 2. HIGH PRIORITY STORMWATER ISSUES

According to the County's Economic Development Website, <https://gostaffordva.com/why-stafford/>, Stafford County is situated just 25 miles south of the Washington DC beltway and has experienced a nearly 40% population growth in the past decade. The County population is well-educated; with over 30% having a college degree; employed, with high disposable income as over 60% of the County households have an income over \$75,000; and homeowners, as homeownership is at 79.5%. The County can best be described as a rapidly growing residential community with commercial growth associated with needed local service industries to support the growing population. Based on its demographics, the County has chosen the its general population as the target audience, with individual outreach efforts directed at specific general population subsets.

In order to comply with the previous MS4 General Permit, issued by DEQ in 2013, the County identified pet waste, residential lawn care, and illicit discharge as the high priority stormwater issues to address as part of its Public Education and Outreach Program. The County has chosen to retain these high priority stormwater issues for inclusion in this PEOP. The rationale for continued selection and importance are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Rationale for Stafford County Selection of High-Priority Stormwater Issues

High-Priority Stormwater Issue	Rationale and Importance for Selection
Pet Waste	The County selected pet waste as a high priority stormwater issue because pet waste is known to contain high volumes of bacteria and the 2016 305(b)/303(d) Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report identified bacteria as a cause of impairment for numerous receiving waters downstream of the County’s MS4 service area in both the Potomac River and Rappahannock River basins. As a residential, bedroom community with a large number of pets, the residential community is an appropriate target audience.
Residential Lawn Care	The County selected residential lawn care as a high priority stormwater issue because EPA has identified improper nutrient application on residential lawns as a source of nutrients that contribute to the Chesapeake Bay impairments. The County believes that the residential community is the appropriate target audience as there are over 42,000 households in the County. While Virginia continues to strengthen laws and regulations pertaining to contractor nutrient applicators, there are only voluntary measures available for homeowners who conduct residential lawn care.
Illicit Discharge	The County selected illicit discharge, in general, as a high-priority stormwater issue because EPA identified eliminating illicit discharges has been identified by EPA as one of the six minimum control measures necessary for MS4 operators to implement in order to reduce pollutants from MS4s to the maximum extent practicable. The general public is not only the eyes and ears for reporting illicit discharges to the County, they are the main source of the illicit discharge, either at home or at work. As such, the general population is an appropriate target audience.

CHAPTER 3. MS4 GENERAL PERMIT PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH REQUIREMENTS

The MS4 General Permit contains minimum conditions for the County’s Public Education and Outreach Program. A summary of these minimum conditions is found in Table 2. Specific MS4 General Permit language can be found at the referenced line numbers in Appendix 1 of the MS4 Program Plan.

Table 2. MS4 General Permit MCM #1 Permit Conditions

<p>Summary of the MS4 General Permit MCM #1 Permit Conditions</p>	<p>MS4 Program Plan Appendix 1 Line Numbers</p>
<p>The County shall implement a public education and outreach program</p>	<p>303-336</p>
<p>The County shall identify no less than three high-priority stormwater issues to meet the goal of educating the public</p>	<p>311-314</p>
<p>The County shall use two or more strategies of the following strategies per year to communicate to the public the high-priority stormwater issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Traditional written materials, including but not limited to, informational brochures, newsletters, fact sheets, utility bill inserts or recreational guides for targeted groups of citizens. ▪ Alternative materials, including but not limited to, bumper stickers, refrigerator magnets, t-shirts, or drink koozies. ▪ Signage, including but not limited to, temporary or permanent signage in public places or facilities, vehicle signage, bill boards or storm drain stenciling ▪ Media materials, including but not limited to, information disseminated through electronic media, radio, television, movie theaters or newspapers ▪ Speaking engagements, including but not limited to presentations to school, church, industry, trade, special interest, or community groups. ▪ Curriculum materials including, but not limited to, materials developed for school-aged children, students at local colleges or universities, or extension classes offered to local citizens. ▪ Training materials including, but not limited to, materials developed to disseminate during workshops offered to local citizens, trade organizations, or industrial officials. 	<p>320-321</p>
<p>The MS4 Program Plan must include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A list of the high-priority stormwater issues the permittee will communicate to the public as part of the public education and outreach program. ▪ The rationale for selection of each high-priority stormwater issue and an explanation of how each education or outreach strategy is intended to have a positive impact on stormwater discharges. ▪ Identification of the public audience to receive each high-priority stormwater message. ▪ The strategies from the MS4 General Permit Table 1 that are to be used to communicate each high- priority stormwater message. ▪ The anticipated time periods the messages will be communicated or made available to the public. 	<p>324-332</p>

CHAPTER 4. POTENTIAL PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PARTNERS

The County currently partners with numerous public organizations to provide local government services to its constituents in an economic and efficient manner. Many of these partnerships are part of a broader local government services provision mechanism and have not been specifically engaged solely for implementing MS4 General Permit control measures. Partner organizations, along with their relationship to the County and their role in MS4 Program Plan implementation are identified in Table 3.

Table 3. Partner Organizations and their Potential Involvement in Stafford County MS4 Program Plan Implementation

Organization	Partnership Description
Central Rappahannock Regional Library (CRRL)	CRRL provides a public location for the distribution of traditional public education and outreach materials.
Friends of the Rappahannock (FOR)	FOR is a local non-profit organization which implements portions of the County's Public Education and Outreach and Public Participation Programs as outlined in the annually renewed MOU between FOR and the County.
George Washington Regional Planning Commission (GWRPC)	GWRPC is the regional planning district commission that engages in community education and outreach activities that the County may wish to consider engaging future MS4 public education and outreach and public involvement needs.
Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC)	NVRC administers the Clean Water Partners (CWP) Only Rain Down the Drain regional stormwater education initiative. The County is a member of the Clean Water Partners through an executed MOU.
Rappahannock Regional Solid Waste Management Board (R-Board)	R-Board is a joint landfill and recycling operational venture between Stafford County and the City of Fredericksburg. R-Board implements the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program for County residents and provides education and outreach regarding proper disposal.
Stafford County Cooperative Extension (VCE)	VCE is the local office of Virginia's land grant colleges that provides access to educational programs for Stafford County residents and for which the County provides funding. VCE engages in community education and outreach activities applicable to the County's public education and outreach and public involvement needs. VCE also implements the Smart Green Lawns Program for County residents.
Tri-County/City Soil and Water Conservation District (TCSWCD)	TCSWCD is a local political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia that receives County funding and whose role specific to the MS4 Program is outlined in the County's MOU with TCSWCD. TCSWCD engages in community education and outreach activities that the County may wish to consider engaging to meet future MS4 public education and outreach and public involvement needs.

CHAPTER 5. EXISTING PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Department of Public Works – Environmental Programs (DPW-EP) is responsible for ensuring that the County’s Public Education and Outreach Program meets the minimum requirements outlined in the MS4 General Permit. The DPW-EP can be contacted as follows:

Physical Address

2126 Jefferson Davis Highway
Suite 203
Stafford, VA 22554

Phone

(540) 658-8830

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 339
Stafford, VA 22555-0339

Website

<https://staffordcountyva.gov/998/Environmental>

The DPW-EP Environmental website contains information and links regarding the County’s overall environmental programs, including:

- Regulatory oversight of the local Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Program, local Virginia Stormwater Management Program and Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act;
- The MS4 stormwater program;
- Environmental program contacts;
- Public education and outreach tools and materials; and,
- Links to partner organization public education and outreach events and activities.

The Environmental website acts as the linchpin of the County’s Stormwater Public Education and Outreach Program. The website maintains a narrative discussion regarding the three selected high priority stormwater issues, why they are important to the citizens of Stafford County and what the public can do to minimize their impact on water quality.

Other County and partner organization activities that are part of the County’s Public Education and Outreach Program as of July 1, 2018 are listed below. While these public education and outreach activities are expected to remain available throughout the life of the MS4 General Permit cycle for the County to continue to utilize, evaluate, and improve, their presence in this Chapter does not commit the County to rely upon them to meet the MS4 General Permit requirements. Their continued use, and any future modifications to these programs, will be based on annual evaluation and selection as well as future memorandums of agreement, when appropriate and necessary.

DPW-EP Publications (MS4 General Permit Strategy: Traditional Materials)

DPW-EP provides copies of both When Nature Calls, Please Pick-Up After Your Pet and the Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination brochures to the Central Rappahannock Regional Library (CRRL). These pamphlets are designed to provide outreach to the general public who visit the library regarding pet waste cleanup and disposal and illicit discharge identification, reporting and elimination. DPW-EP coordinates with CRRL officials with the intention that the brochures are available year-round.

Copies of both brochures are maintained in the County’s digital stormwater Reference Library as described in the MS4 Program Plan and provided year-round to the public on the County’s Environmental website.

Northern Virginia Clean Water Partnership (MS4 General Permit Strategy: Media Materials)

Through a Memorandum of Agreement with the NVRC, the County is a partner in the Northern Virginia Clean Water Partnership’s regional public education and outreach program, *Only Rain Down the Drain*.

The Only Rain Down the Drain campaign uses digital, television and radio advertising and its website (<https://www.onlyrain.org/>) to promote stormwater issues and pollution prevention awareness regarding pet care including pet waste, lawn care, and home maintenance. The educational initiative also promotes litter prevention and the need to prevent illegal dumping and provides local contacts and resources for Stafford County residents. The website provides access to the televised public service announcements and the radio ads produced during program implementation and annual summaries of the work completed. While the website is available year-round, annual advertising schedules are determined based on the issue and message.

In addition to the public education and outreach provided to the general public by the regional initiative, the County augments its outreach by providing a year-round link to the onlydrain.org website and associated information to the general County population on the County's Environmental website.

Parks, Recreation and County Facility (PRCF) Duff McDuff Memorial Park Pet Waste Signage (MS4 General Permit Strategy: Signage)

PRCF maintains year-round signage at the County's first, and only, dog park reminding dog owners utilizing the park to cleanup pet waste. This signage re-enforces the message to cleanup pet waste.

Stafford County Cooperative Extension Service (VCE) Soil Test Kits and Smart Green Lawns Program (MS4 General Permit Strategy: Alternative Materials; Training Materials)

The Stafford County Cooperative Extension Service provides tools and services to County residents regarding residential lawn care:

- Soil Test Kits
- Smart Green Lawns Program.

VCE maintains soil test kits at its office located in the Rowser Building at 1739 Jefferson Davis Highway, Stafford, VA. County residents can pick up VCE soil test kits and directions on how to take a soil sample. County residents can then complete the information form associated with the sample, take a sample and send it to Virginia Tech for analysis along with a check for the cost of the analysis. Soil testing provides County residents increased knowledge and education on how to properly care for their lawns and gardens, including proper nutrient application.

VCE also implements the region's Smart Green Lawns Program. The Smart Green Lawns Program is offered annually between March 1 and October 31. Upon enrollment and payment of the enrollment fee, a Master Gardener volunteer visits the residence, collects a soil sample and measures the managed lawn area. After soil analysis, the County resident receives a Smart Green Lawns handbook and a customized lime and fertilizer plan for implementation using environmentally sound practices to protect downstream waters.

Additional information regarding both programs is available from VCE either by visiting their website at www.offices.ext.vt.edu/stafford or calling them at (540) 658-8000. In addition, the DPW-EP website provides a link directly to the VCE website.

Rappahannock Regional Solid Waste Management Board Community Outreach (MS4 General Permit Strategies: Media Materials, Speaking Engagements and Training Materials)

The R-Board maintains an active community outreach program that builds upon the County's identification of illicit discharges as a high priority stormwater issue. The R-Board's community outreach program concentrates on informing County residents on what they can do to properly dispose of wastes and materials rather than potentially causing adverse impacts to the environment, including downstream water quality.

The R-Board maintains a Community Outreach website that provides County residents information on household hazardous waste collection events, environmental education, litter cleanup, backyard composting, and pollution prevention designed to protect streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. R-Board staff re-enforce their message by reaching the public through participation in regional events such as Earth Day and school events and providing classes to County residents on environmentally sound waste disposal practices, such as their Backyard Composting 101 class, which teaches homeowners how to compost food scraps and yard wastes. The Community Outreach website is available year-round and maintains a schedule of upcoming outreach events and activities including future Backyard Composting 101 classes. R-Board events and activities are further promoted using social media (Twitter and Facebook).

Additional information regarding the R-Board Community Outreach program is available from its website, <http://r-board.org/>. The DPW-EP website provides a link to the R-Board website.

Storm Drain Marking (MS4 General Permit Strategy – Signage)

The DPW-EP promotes and supports the placement of storm drain markers on stormwater infrastructure inlets to promote awareness that illicit discharges and materials that are illegally dumped are not treated before discharge into the local receiving waters. The DPW-EP website maintains contact information regarding coordinating storm drain marking. As of July 1, 2018, the storm drain marking program is overseen by the Friends of Rappahannock (FOR) as a result of an annual Memorandum of Understanding that must be evaluated and revisited each year.

CHAPTER 6. COUNTY PEOP IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE FOR PY01 AND PY02

The County intends to continue to build upon the existing public education and outreach strategies identified in Chapter 5. However, the County has to ensure flexibility in its commitments in order to implement the PEOP in a manner that is designed to:

- Increase the public's knowledge of how to reduce stormwater pollution, placing priority on reducing impacts to impaired waters and other local water pollution concerns;
- Increase the public's knowledge of hazards associated with illegal discharges and improper disposal of waste, including pertinent legal implications; and
- Implement a diverse program with strategies that are targeted toward individuals or groups most likely to have significant stormwater impacts.

As such, PEOP commitments are updated annually. The County will continue to comply with the MS4 Permit requirements by utilizing the existing public education and outreach opportunities in Chapter 5 for PY01 and PY02 with the following additions:

- During PY01, the County will update its DPW-EP website to meet the contents of the PEOP.
- During PY01, the DPW-EP will coordinate with the VCE to better strengthen its relationship regarding the VCE's soil sample kit and Smart Green Lawns programs.
- During PY02, DPW-EP will evaluate the opportunity to provide the Stafford County Animal Shelter Pet Waste Bag Dispensers along with When Nature Calls, Please Pick Up After Your Pet brochures to the Stafford County Animal Shelter for distribution with pet adoption in order to increase awareness associated with pet waste cleanup.

The County PEOP commitments for the denoted MS4 General Permit reporting periods are found in the following tables for Pet Waste (Table 4), Residential Lawn Care (Table 5) and Illicit Discharges (Table 6).

Table 4. Stafford County Public Education and Outreach Commitments for PY01 and PY02 for the High Priority Stormwater Issue – Pet Waste

High Priority Stormwater Issue	Category Utilized	Description	P Y 0 1	P Y 0 2	P Y 0 3	P Y 0 4	P Y 0 5
Pet Waste	Traditional Materials	DPW-EP will provide copies of the When Nature Calls, Please Pick Up After Your Pet brochure to the CRRL for public distribution.	X	X			
	Signage	PRCF will maintain signage at Duff McDuff Memorial Park Dog Parks regarding pet waste cleanup.	X	X			
	Media Materials	The County will maintain partnership in the Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners education and outreach initiative.	X	X			
	Media Materials	The DPW-EP will provide a narrative of why Pet Waste is a high-priority stormwater issue as well as access to the When Nature Calls, Please Pick Up After Your Pet brochure and the NVCWP Only Rain Down the Drain website including the associated PSAs on the DPW-EP MS4 website.	X	X			
	Alternative Materials	DPW-EP will evaluate the opportunity to provide Dog Poop Bag Dispensers and When Nature Calls, Please Pick Up After Your Pet brochures to the Stafford County Animal Shelter for distribution with pet adoption.		X			

Table 5. Stafford County Public Education and Outreach Commitments for PY01 and PY02 for the High Priority Stormwater Issue – Residential Lawn Care

High Priority Stormwater Issue	Category Utilized	Description	P Y 0 1	P Y 0 2	P Y 0 3	P Y 0 4	P Y 0 5
Residential Lawn Care	Alternative Materials	The County will coordinate with the Stafford County Cooperative Extension Service to ensure continued availability of the Soil Sample Test Kits for Stafford County residents.	X	X			
	Media Materials	The County will maintain partnership in the Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners education and outreach initiative.	X	X			
	Media Materials	The DPW-EP will provide a narrative of why Residential Lawn Care is a high-priority stormwater issue as well as access to the Stafford County Cooperative Extension Service Smart Green Lawns Program webpage, the NVCWP Only Rain Down the Drain website including the associated PSAs and a link to the Fertilizer Responsibility YouTube video on the DPW-EP MS4 website.	X	X			
	Training Materials	The County will promote and coordinate with the Stafford County Cooperative Extension Service to provide delivery of the Smart Green Lawns Program to Stafford County residents.	X	X			
	Training Materials	R-Board will continue to offer backyard composting classes for homeowners to teach residents to compost food scraps and yard waste.	X	X			

Table 6. Stafford County Public Education and Outreach Commitments for PY01 and PY02 for the High Priority Stormwater Issue – Illicit Discharges

High Priority Stormwater Issue	Category Utilized	Description	P Y 0 1	P Y 0 2	P Y 0 3	P Y 0 4	P Y 0 5
Illicit Discharges	Traditional Materials	DPW-EP will provide copies of the Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Program brochure to the CRRL for public distribution.	X	X			
	Alternative Materials	The County will continue to promote and sponsor a storm drain marking program designed to increase awareness against dumping waste down the storm drains.	X	X			
	Media Materials	The County will maintain partnership in the Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners education and outreach initiative.	X	X			
	Media Materials	The DPW-EP will provide a narrative of why Illicit Discharges are a high-priority stormwater issue as well as access to the County's Illicit Discharge Reporting contact information, the Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Program brochure, the R-Board Household Hazardous Waste Collection and Composting 101 Programs, the Storm Drain Marking Program and the NVCWP Only Rain Down the Drain website including the associated PSAs on the DPW-EP MS4 website.	X	X			
	Speaking Engagements	The R-Board will continue to implement its community outreach program involving attendance at regional events such as Earth Day to promote recycling and proper trash disposal including household hazardous waste recycling opportunities.	X	X			

CHAPTER 7. DOCUMENTATION AND ANNUAL REPORTING

The MS4 General Permit requires that referenced materials and documents be kept as part of the MS4 Program Plan. The MS4 General Permit also requires that the County keep information regarding implementation of the PEOP and that additional information must be included as part of each MS4 Annual Report.

MS4 Program Plan Documents and Materials

The following information must be included as part of the MS4 Program Plan and up-to-date copies must be kept in the County's digital stormwater Reference Library:

- The PEOP
- Copies of all traditional materials utilized in delivery of the PEOP including the following brochures:
 - When Nature Calls, Please Pick Up After Your Pet
 - Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
- Copies of Memorandums of Agreement with partner organizations who implement portions of the PEOP including the following:
 - Northern Virginia Regional Commission
 - Friends of the Rappahannock

MS4 Annual Reporting

As described in the MS4 Program Plan, the County is required to submit an MS4 Annual Report to DEQ that must include the following information regarding the Public Education and Outreach Program implementation efforts:

- A list of the high-priority stormwater issues the County addressed in the public education and outreach program
- A list of the strategies used to communicate each high priority stormwater issue

The County must also conduct an evaluation regarding Public Education and Outreach Program to determine its effectiveness and whether changes are necessary. Proposed changes must be included in the MS4 Annual Report and the PEOP must be updated to include the changes. The updated PEOP must be kept in the County's digital stormwater Reference Library.

In addition, DPW-EP must coordinate with County departments and partner agencies to obtain sufficient information to document their efforts regarding PEOP implementation. Examples of the necessary documentation may include:

- The Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners Annual Summary
- The dates and locations of R-Board speaking engagements and Backyard Composting 101 classes
- The number of Stafford County residences who obtained VCE soil test kits or enrolled in the Smart Green Lawns programs
- The neighborhoods and number of storm drains marked as part of the storm drain marking program