

STORMWATER NEWS

Town of Spring Lake, North Carolina

Spring 2014

Remember: It's not just stormwater ... it's your drinking water

Welcome Message

Welcome to the spring edition of the Spring Lake Stormwater newsletter. I would like to start off this issue by thanking everyone who stopped by the stormwater informational booth during the Spring Fling event held at Mendoza Park on April 26. It was a great event with good food, entertainment and information for everyone and I am already looking forward to next year's event to make it even better. Another big thank you to everyone who dropped off items at the annual household hazardous waste collection event held on April 12. We collected approximately 3,000 pounds of materials or to say it in another way geared to stormwater, we kept 3,000 pounds of material out of our local streams and landfills. So again, a big thank you to everyone who participated and also to Clean Harbors Environmental, the onsite collection contractor, for making it a success.



Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event

If you have any questions, comments or ideas to help improve the water quality in Spring Lake please let us know by contacting Spring Lake Stormwater at (910) 497-5748.

Connecting the Drops

This issue will also debut the new stormwater program "Connecting the Drops" that will include all the departments stormwater and water quality information, education, and outreach efforts. The idea of the concept is that our water cycle can be compared to a game of connect the dots. In connect the dots when you first look at the page it just looks like a random series of dots much like rain drops. When you start to connect the dots with lines does a picture start to form. It is much the same way with stormwater. Only the dots are rain drops and the lines are the path they follow to the streams through grass ditches on the side of the roads or through pipes with a focus on ensuring that the path is clear of any materials (trash, lawn debris, pet waste, chemicals, etc.) that would pollute our local waterways. Just like in a game of connect the dots our goal is to make sure the final image is the one intended which in our case is beautiful and clean streams, lakes, rivers and even streets. Look for more information and programs featuring the logo on the right in the upcoming months. If you or your organization would like to partner with Spring Stormwater on a water quality outreach project (presentations, stream cleanup, stormwater facility, etc.) please let us know by contacting Tim Garner, Stormwater Administrator, at (910) 497-5748. We are always happy to provide information or assistance.



Lawn and Yard Care Tips for Water Quality

Caring for your lawn properly can both enhance its appearance and provide environmental benefits. Healthy grass is a feeding ground for birds, while also preventing soil erosion, filtering contaminants from rainwater, and absorbing many types of airborne pollutants. These tips will help you achieve a healthy lawn while minimizing negative impacts caused by improper lawn care.

All of us live downstream of other communities and we don't want them sending their pollutants to us. We also live upstream of someone else's community and we have a responsibility not to send our waste to our downstream neighbors too.

Products like pesticides and fertilizers are one of the biggest sources of pollution in our waterways. When these products are applied on lawns, they get washed away with stormwater which isn't treated before it reaches local waterways.

General Lawn Care Tips

- Use organic mulch and environmentally friendly pest control when possible.
- When necessary, use pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers sparingly and follow manufacturer's directions. Excess is washed into streams where it pollutes the water.
- Compost or mulch yard waste. Grass clippings naturally fertilize your lawn.
- Don't leave or sweep clippings or other yard waste in the street, on sidewalks, driveways or parking lots, especially around storm drains. Clogged drains cause maintenance and flooding issues.
- Don't over water.
- If you are a commercial landscaper, you are legally responsible for ensuring stormwater pollutants are properly managed and these tips will help you meet that obligation.

Reduce Pesticide Use

- Landscape for low maintenance and use native plants to aid pest control.
- Attract birds or bats to your yard. They eat many types of insects including flies and mosquitoes.
- Use integrated pest management strategies (IPM) to control pests. IPM integrates biological principles, cultural practices and limited chemicals in pest control strategies.

Reduce Fertilizer Use

- Choose plants that resist drought and enhance the growth of other plants.
- Use a mulching mower and cut 1/3 of the height of the grass. Clipped grass adds nutrients back into the soil.
- Cut grass more often and only when dry and make sure the blades are kept sharp.
- Consider using organic fertilizers such as bone meal, blood meal, compost, or organic blends. No matter what product you use, though, be sure to follow the manufacturer's directions for application rate and timing.



Watering Without Waste

- Established lawns are happy with one inch of water per week, including rainfall. And if you must water, water just once a week for a deep soaking.
- Adjust sprinklers so that they don't water paved surfaces. In the event that it's unavoidable, direct the flow of water toward your lawn or garden.
- Check the weather forecast, if you have automatic sprinklers and be sure they aren't programmed to come on in the rain.
- Don't water in the heat of the day. Watering early in the morning or in the evening minimizes the water lost to evaporation.
- Consider using slow-watering techniques such as drip irrigation or soaker hoses. They are considerably more effective than sprinklers at getting the water where it's supposed to be.

