



WORKING TOGETHER FOR HEALTHY STREAMS AND RIVERS

Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners

2013 Summary

About the Partnership




Polluted stormwater runoff is the number one cause of poor water quality in streams and rivers in Northern Virginia. As stormwater runs off city streets, suburban yards and parking lots, it picks up pesticides and fertilizer from lawns, bacteria from pet waste, as well as petroleum and oil from driveways and parking lots. Don't forget about the sediment from construction sites or the litter and cigarette butts from the sidewalk.

To reduce the impacts of stormwater pollution, the Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners aims to change human behaviors in our cities and neighborhoods through a public awareness and education campaign.

The Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners is comprised of a multi-disciplinary group of local governments, drinking water and sanitation authorities, and individual businesses working together to address the common issues surrounding pollution prevention, stormwater management, and source water protection. "Only Rain Down the Storm Drain" is the motto of the partnership.

The primary goal of the partnership is to reduce stormwater-related pollution from entering local waterways.

To meet this goal, the Partners work together to:

-  Educate the region's residents on simple ways to reduce pollution around their homes;
-  Monitor changes in behavior through surveys and other data collection techniques; and
-  Pilot new cost-effective opportunities for public outreach and education.

Members include stormwater program managers, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS₄) Permit managers, communication directors, public information officers, water quality compliance specialists, and environmental planners.

Membership is voluntary. However, the partnership provides a cost-effective means to meet mandatory state and federal stormwater requirements. By working together the partners are able to leverage their available funds to develop and place bilingual products with common messages and

themes, thereby extending their individual reach.

Regional Stormwater Education Campaign

The Annual Regional Stormwater Education Campaign was initiated in 2003 to assist localities in leveraging funds to achieve common goals regarding stormwater education and outreach and promote consistent messages for fertilizer and pesticide use, pet waste disposal, and motor oil recycling.

The 2013 campaign satisfied MS₄ (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) Phase I and Phase II permit requirements for stormwater education and documenting changes in behavior.

For more information visit www.onlyrain.org



Partners

The Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners is open to any municipal government in and around Northern Virginia. A full list of the organizations participating in the 2013 campaign year is provided on the back of this summary.



2013 Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners

Fairfax County | Arlington County | Loudoun County | Stafford County | Fairfax Water | City of Alexandria | Loudoun Water | Alexandria Sanitation Authority | City of Fairfax | Town of Herndon | City of Falls Church | Town of Leesburg | Town of Vienna | Town of Dumfries | Doody Calls | Northern Virginia Regional Commission | Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program | George Mason University |



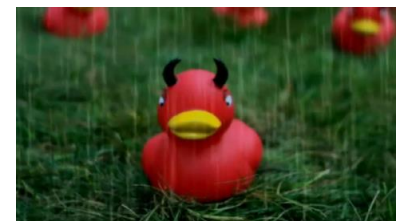
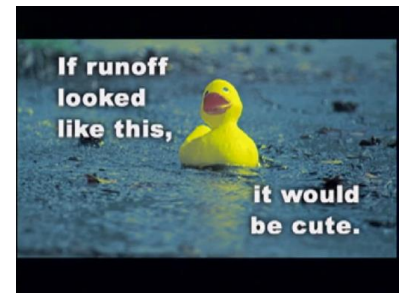
2013 Campaign Overview

In 2013, the Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners used television, print, internet advertising and the Only Rain Down the Storm Drain website to distribute messages linked to specific stormwater problems, such as proper pet waste disposal, over fertilization of lawns and gardens and proper disposal of motor oil. In addition to the multi-channel media campaign, educational events hosted throughout the Northern Virginia region also raised awareness and encouraged positive behavior change in residents. The television and internet ads featured the well known national symbol of non-point source pollution; the rubber ducky.



Throughout the campaign year, the Partners made the following efforts to educate the public and promote awareness of stormwater pollution:

- 🦆 From April 2013 through August 2013, four commercials featuring messages on the importance of picking up pet waste and general household stormwater pollution reduction measures aired on twelve cable TV channels, including three Spanish speaking channels a total of 1530 times.
- 🦆 These TV ads reached approximately 3,768,412 Northern Virginia residents and resulted in over 400 visits to the www.onlyrain.org website
- 🦆 The campaign also featured banner ads on the Comcast website that promote the same messages as the cable TV ads.
- 🦆 An online survey of 500 Northern Virginia residents helped determine the effectiveness of the ads, reveal any changes in behavior, and aid in directing the future efforts of the campaign.



3,768,412	Cable TV Advertising Impressions*
2000	Dog waste bag dispensers distributed
1,530	Number of times the ads aired from April – July
427,872	Number of banner ads aired
500	Online Annual Survey Responses



Main cause of water pollution...

For the third year in a row, the majority of survey respondents stated fertilizers and pesticides as the main cause of pollution in the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay.



Where stormwater goes...

Over 90 percent of Northern Virginia residents surveyed stated that stormwater goes to the Potomac River, the Chesapeake Bay, or to local streams and rivers.



97%

Stated the actions of individuals are important in protecting water quality in local streams, the Potomac River, and the Chesapeake Bay is important.



75%

Would be more likely to take actions to reduce the amounts of pollutants they personally put into storm drains, after learning that polluted water runoff is the number one cause of local water pollution.












95%

Believe it is important for local governments to spend more money on protecting water quality.

Annual Survey Highlights

To assist in determining the effectiveness of the campaign at increasing awareness and changing behaviors, after each campaign year, the Partners conduct an online annual survey of 500 Northern Virginia residents.

Findings in the 2013 survey include:

-  20 percent of the respondents recalled hearing or seeing advertisements on the internet or on TV about reducing water pollution.
-  Of those who recalled the ads, three percent state they now pick up their pet waste more often, four percent state that they are more careful with motor oil, and 13 percent state they fertilize fewer times per year.
-  The number of respondents choosing litter or industrial pollution as the number one source of pollution has decreased over the past three years.
-  43 percent of respondents knew they live in the Potomac River watershed, up from 38 percent in 2011.
-  Interestingly, almost 80 percent of people surveyed reported that they always pick up after their pet, as compared with 30 percent in previous surveys.
-  When shown the Only Rain Down the Storm Drain logo, over half of the respondents recognized the logo.
-  87 percent of respondents were familiar with rain barrels, and 69 percent stated they already have a rain barrel or are interested in getting one.
-  36 percent of respondents were familiar with rain gardens, with 62 percent already having a rain garden or interested in installing one.
-  More than half of the respondents (54%) prefer to receive information from online sources. Newspaper (19%) and television (18%) were the next two information sources.

Understanding Behaviors

In addition to capturing responses to questions regarding the effectiveness of the campaign, this year's survey honed in on the current behaviors of Northern Virginia residents as they relate to pet waste management, lawn care, and motor oil disposal. Responses to these questions support the development of future messages and targeted promotion.

The most important reason dog owners are motivated to pick up their pet's waste is because "It's what good neighbors do". Approximately one-in-eight (14%) selected "It causes water pollution" as the most important reason to pick up. 70 percent believe that dog waste disposal stations would be useful.

A third of the lawn and garden owners fertilize their lawns two or more times per year; an equal number never fertilize their lawns. Among those who fertilize once a year, the same percentage reported doing so in the spring as in the fall. This suggests that there is room to educate more residents of Northern Virginia that fertilizing in the fall is better for local waterways than fertilizing in the spring.

About half of the respondents reported using an herbicide to treat weeds in their lawn or garden.

To better understand behavior related to the application of fertilizer, three new questions about fertilizer were added to the 2013 survey. Among those who fertilize their lawn, 73 percent have never had or were not sure if their soil had been tested for fertility or pH and one third reported using a slow release N fertilizer. When asked where they get information to decide when and how much fertilizer to apply the top three most commonly selected responses were "Follow directions on the bag" (52%), followed by "Lawn service conducts the applications" (27%), and then "Follow soil test results / recommendations" (7%).

The majority of respondents take their vehicle to a service station to change their oil (85%) or take used oil to a gas station or hazmat facility for recycling (11%). Only one percent of Northern Virginians store used motor oil in their garage, place it in the trash or dump it down the storm drain.

Only Rain
Down the
Drain

www.onlyrain.org

2012 Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners

Fairfax County | Arlington County | Loudoun County | Stafford County | Fairfax Water |
City of Alexandria | Loudoun Water | Alexandria Sanitation Authority | City of Fairfax |
Town of Herndon | City of Falls Church | Town of Leesburg | Town of Vienna |
Town of Dumfries | Doody Calls | Northern Virginia Regional Commission | George Mason
University | Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program

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