

Coming Soon! To a Storm Drain Near You!

# Fairfax County Storm Drain Education Program

## Why label storm drains?

Storm drains prevent flooding of roads and neighborhoods by carrying rain and snowmelt away from streets and sidewalks. Unlike water from our taps and tub, water flowing into storm drains is not treated. **Storm drains connect directly to our streams.** Trash, pet waste, motor oil, paint and other materials dumped or washed into storm drains pollute your local stream, the Potomac River, and ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay. Labels on each storm drain remind all of us to keep storm drains and our streams clean.

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## What can you do to protect your local stream and Bay?

√ **Volunteer to lead a storm drain project in your neighborhood.**

Contact the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District at **703-324-1460**, **TTY 711** or [conservationdistrict@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:conservationdistrict@fairfaxcounty.gov) to get started. We supply the materials, you supply the legwork. Together we educate our communities about the connection between our storm drains and our streams. For more information, visit

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/soil-water-conservation/storm-drain-education>



√ **Make sure nothing goes down the storm drain except water.** Adopt your local storm drain and keep it clear of trash and debris, dispose of pet waste in your trash can or toilet, compost yard debris and recycle used motor oil at your local gas station.

√ Practice Bay-friendly lawn care. Check the forecast before applying chemicals, including fertilizers, to your lawn. Try using Virginia native plants to reduce your garden's chemical needs.

√ **Report storm drain dumping.** Report hazardous substances such as oil, chlorine, and poisons to Fairfax County Fire and Rescue by calling 911. Report illegal dumping to the Department of Code Compliance at 703-324-1300. For all other illicit discharges and additional guidance, visit: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/illicit-discharge-and-improper-disposal-idid-program>.

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Sponsored by Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District and Virginia Department of Transportation-Northern Virginia District.

# Storm Drain Education: Step by Step

## Guidelines for Projects in Fairfax County

1. **Contact** the **Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District** at 703-324-1460, TTY 711 or [conservationdistrict@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:conservationdistrict@fairfaxcounty.gov) to schedule a program orientation and get your project started.

2. We will help you **locate** the storm drains in your neighborhood.

3. Get **approval** for your project from your local HOA or civic association.

4. Develop a storm drain education flier or write an article to share with the homes in your project area. Think about other ways you might **spread the word** about the connection between the storm drain and our streams such as creating a display for a local event or contacting the local newspaper.

5. **Get organized!** Set a date for distributing education information and labeling the storm drains. Recruit others to help you with your project and make sure you have the supplies you need. Think about keeping yourself and your fellow volunteers happy and safe! Safety gloves and vests are always a good idea, as are snacks and drinks at the end of the day.



6. **Educate your community! Label the drains!**

Make sure to take pictures to send to NVSWCD to help publicize this program. Return your supplies and report back to NVSWCD about your project accomplishments.

7. **Be proud** of the efforts you and your group have made to keep Fairfax County's streams and the Chesapeake Bay clean for us and for wildlife!



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Photograph courtesy of Northern Virginia Regional Commission

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[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/soil-water-conservation/storm-drain-education](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/soil-water-conservation/storm-drain-education)