



Mainstream

Newsletter of the Surface Water Management Agency of Clackamas County

SPRING 2002

Citizens Taking an Active Role in Improving Watershed Health

Citizens who want to participate in improving the health of our watersheds have a variety of opportunities available. One of the best citizen involvement opportunities in Clackamas County is to become a member of the Lower Tualatin Citizens Advisory Committee (LTCAC).

Federal and State regulations require Clackamas County to administer comprehensive management programs that improve storm water and surface water quality in urbanized and rural areas. Established in 1991, the LTCAC meets six times each year with Water Environment Services staff to review and discuss information about projects and programs that are having a positive impact on watershed health, including rules and regulations, maintenance, erosion control, endangered species act issues and more.

Interested residents within the Surface Water Management Agency of Clackamas County (SWMACC) and representatives of businesses, associations, non-profit groups, and other organizations that are based in SWMACC are encouraged to apply. Interested individuals need to complete an application form. Applications may be completed and submitted online via the County's website, www.co.clackamas.or.us/citizenin/. For an application form, contact the Office of Citizen Involvement, 503-655-8552. **The application deadline is Friday, May 31, 2002.** For more information contact Randy Shierman, 503-353-4596.



Surface Water Monitoring Program

Water Environment Services administers a Surface Water Monitoring Program within the borders of the Surface Water Management Agency of

Clackamas County (SWMACC). The Surface Water Monitoring Program's services include monthly water quality sample collection, monthly stream flow assessment, laboratory analysis of water samples, and data management and reporting.

Water quality and flow data is collected for the following reasons: To ensure that SWMACC remains in compliance with state and federal regulations; to gauge the effectiveness of the community's efforts to improve water quality; to guide future expenditures of ratepayers funds; and to enhance our understanding of the Tualatin River watershed.

The Program's monitoring locations provide a representative view of overall water quality in SWMACC, for they're spread throughout the service district and are situated downstream from lands which are zoned for all of the land uses found in the District, including agriculture and low, medium, and high-density residential areas. The creeks in SWMACC that are monitored on a monthly basis are: Fields Creek at SW Elderberry Lane; unnamed

creek at SW Ribera Lane; unnamed creek at SW Ek Road; Athey Creek at SW Borland Road; Saum Creek at SW Halcyon Road; Carter Creek at SW Bangy Road; Pecan Creek at SW Mossy Brae Rd; Rock Creek at SW Morgan Rd; Shipley Creek at SW Shadow Wood Drive; Wilson Creek at SW Long Farm Road; and Tate Creek at SW Johnson Road.

In addition, through a cooperative effort the Tualatin River mainstem is monitored near West Linn at river mile 3.4. Partners include SWMACC, the Cities of West Linn and Lake Oswego, Clean Water Services of Washington County, the Lake Oswego Corporation, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

The following parameters are monitored during the monthly visit to each site: Water temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, total dissolved solids, stream flow (only available at six locations), ammonia, E. coli (bacteria), nitrate, orthophosphate, total phosphate, and total suspended solids. These parameters were selected to ensure that SWMACC will continue to be in compliance with the watershed's new Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2001.

Several changes to SWMACC's Surface Water Monitoring Program were instituted on July 1, 2001. Some changes were made to the list of monitoring locations that are visited each month. Other changes were made to the list of parameters that are evaluated at each location. The program modifications ensure that we will continue to collect a tremendous amount of very valuable data in a cost-effective manner. Average monthly expenditures for laboratory analysis have been reduced to \$1,685 from \$3,741 for an annual savings of \$24,672. These funds are already being used in a variety of ways by WES to improve water quality in SWMACC. A detailed explanation of these programmatic changes are outlined in the "Surface Water and Storm Water Monitoring Plan for CCSD#1 and SWMACC."

Water Environment Services has been collecting water quality data from streams within SWMACC on a monthly basis since 1994. This data has been submitted in annual reports to Oregon's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Call Andrew Swanson at 503-353-4567 for more information or for a copy of a recent water quality monitoring report.

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Maintenance of public storm water systems is an important element of the Surface Water program. Removal of debris and contaminants from the systems benefits water quality downstream and prevents flooding of roadways and private property. In SWMACC, these systems include drywells, storm lines, and roadside drainage ditches. If you know of areas that need maintenance or would like more information about maintenance projects completed, please call Randy Shierman at 503-353-4596.

What Goes On Your Lawn..... Goes in the River

What we do in our daily lives around home – from washing the car to fertilizing the lawn and garden – can affect the health of our rivers and streams. That's because the storm drains in streets and parking lots, drainage ditches, and road systems carry rain and irrigation runoff directly to the river. Maybe it's a leaky oil pan in our car or a pesticide we've put in the garden; it may be the family pet's droppings left on the curb. It may be unintentional, but if it's on the ground, rain can wash it into the street or storm drain, and from there it goes directly and untreated into our neighborhood streams and rivers.



Why should we care about keeping our rivers and streams clean?

In the Northwest, clean water and healthy rivers and streams are important to our quality of life. Our waterways are important for recreation, scenery, drinking water, and for wildlife. Pollution threatens all of this. A major source of water pollution is runoff from rain or irrigation. Water running over lawns, gardens, streets and rooftops can pick up pollution in its path and carry it to our waterways. In this way, fertilizer, weed killer and many other chemicals enter our rivers. What we do in our homes and yards can pollute our water.

The river starts with each of us.

Clean water is up to each one of us. Explore these tips to see how you can help.

1. Landscape with plants that are adapted to our environment. They're more pest resistant and require less maintenance and pesticides, and often, less water.
2. Manage insect pests by planting a diversity of plants and providing ample habitat to attract beneficial insects.
3. Build healthy soil with compost and always use fertilizers responsibly. Healthy soil means healthy plants.
4. Leave grass clippings on the lawn.
5. For information about proper storage, use and disposal of pesticides, call Metro's Recycling Information Center hotline at 503-234-3000.

More tips for water quality are available through our website at www.co.clackamas.or.us/wes/, or call us at 503-353-4567. The above graphic is being used in a regional ad campaign April 1 through April 28 and is sponsored by the Regional Coalition of Clean Rivers and Streams. Members include Water Environment Services.

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