



Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners

2016 Summary

WORKING TOGETHER FOR HEALTHY STREAMS AND RIVERS

Polluted stormwater runoff is the number one cause of poor water quality in streams and rivers in Northern Virginia. When it rains and water runs off city streets, suburban yards and parking lots, it picks up pesticides, grass clippings, 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. All of this pollution enters the storm drains on the street and is discharged directly to a stream. It is not filtered or sent to a sanitary sewage facility.

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-disciplined group of local governments, drinking water and sanitation authorities, and individual businesses working together to inform individuals and households about the pollution potential of common activities, such as washing cars, applying lawn chemicals, changing motor oil, and disposing of leftover paint and household chemicals so

that individuals can take direct action to reduce pollution.

“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:

-  Identify high priority water quality issues for the region;
-  Identify the target audience(s) for outreach;
-  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 and each member pays annual dues to fund the program. 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 educational 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 high priority water quality issues.

The 2016 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



About the Partnership

The Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners is open to any water and sewer district, government agency, or school system in and around Northern Virginia.



2016 Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners

Fairfax County | Arlington County | Loudoun County | Stafford County | Fairfax Water | City of Alexandria | Loudoun Water | 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 | Fairfax County Public Schools | Northern Virginia Community College | Prince William County Public Schools | Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District




2016 Campaign Overview

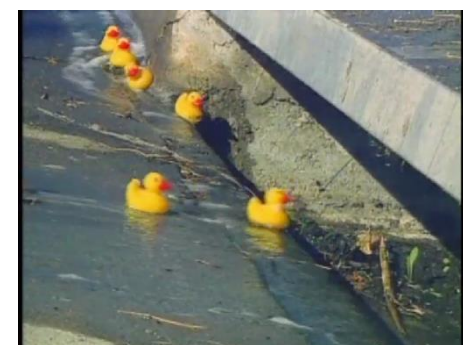
In 2016, the Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners selected the following three high priority water quality issues; 1) bacteria, 2) nutrients, and 3) illicit discharge of chemical contaminants to focus on for the Campaign. The Partners identified the target audiences for these issues as 1) pet owners, 2) homeowners with a lawn or garden, and 3) home mechanics.

The Campaign 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 July 2015 through June 2016, four Public Service Announcements featuring messages on the importance of picking up pet waste and general household stormwater pollution reduction measures aired on 32 English language cable TV channels, and four Spanish speaking channels a total of 41,434 times.





- 🦆 The campaign also featured banner ads on Xfinity.com and Cox.com websites that promote the same messages as the cable TV ads.
- 🦆 Featured two full day, full page ads on the sign-in pages for Xfinity.com
- 🦆 Conducted an online survey of 500 Northern Virginia residents to determine the effectiveness of the ads, aid in directing the future efforts of the campaign, and to reveal any changes in behavior.

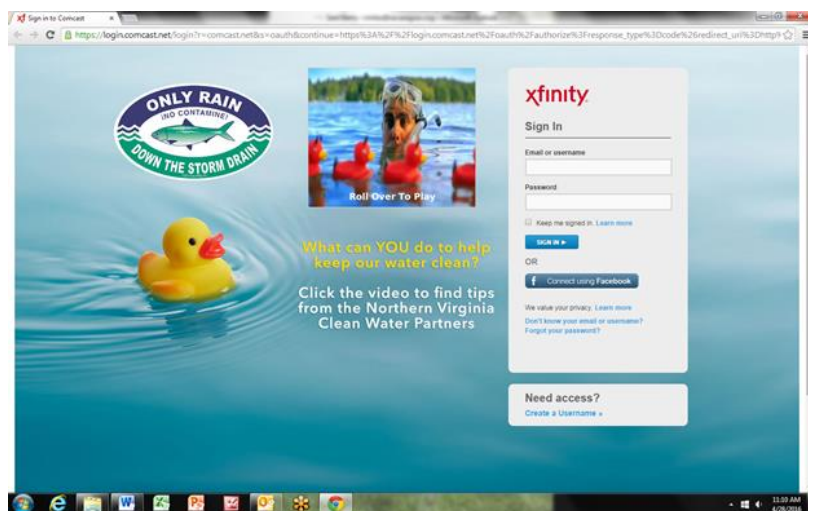


- 🦆 Attended various community events to promote awareness of proper disposal of pet waste and clean water lawn care tips.
- 🦆 Continued to update and maintain the Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners website. ➤

2016 Accomplishments

16,750,236	Total household television impressions*
1,381,317	Total digital impressions including internet banner ads and in-stream video ads
41,434	Number of times the ads aired on television from July 2015 – June 2016
37,489	Visits to the www.onlyrain.org website
500	Online Annual Survey Responses
75%	Percent of target audience reached

* Impressions are the number of times an ad appeared on a single television or computer screen.





Main cause of water pollution...

The believed #1 cause of local water pollution was fertilizers and pesticides.



Where stormwater goes...

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



90%

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



70%

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

Findings in the 2016 survey include:

- 🦆 A video clip of one of the Clean Water Partners ads was presented in the survey and 16% of respondents recalled seeing the ad after watching the video.
- 🦆 The two channels that were most strongly associated with recall of the ad were Cartoon Network and Animal Planet. In fact, the highest numbers of impressions (2.8 million) were delivered on Cartoon Network.
- 🦆 Of those who recalled the ads, 18 percent state they now pick up their pet waste more often, eight percent state that they now properly dispose of motor oil, and 14 percent state they plan to fertilize fewer times per year.
- 🦆 13 percent of respondents believe that stormwater runoff goes to a wastewater treatment facility which indicates the importance of storm drain marking to promote awareness.
- 🦆 In a new question for 2016 to understand the barriers to taking action, 40 percent of the respondents felt they were most prevented from taking action to protect clean water because they didn't know what to do.
- 🦆 In another new question added in 2016, approximately one-third (34%) indicated that email newsletters with reminders and quick tips and/or online resources would help them take action to protect clean water.
- 🦆 When shown the Only Rain Down the Storm Drain logo, 61 percent of the respondents recognized it compared to 54 percent in 2013. This increase is statistically significant and indicates that awareness of the logo has increased over time.
- 🦆 Interestingly, the number of respondents who prefer to receive information from online sources has decreased from a high of 57 percent in 2012 to 40 percent in 2016. Television (19%), newspaper and community newsletters were equally preferred information sources. This suggests that a future outreach effort might include reaching homeowners through their Community Associations.

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 and attitudes 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". The number of respondents choosing "It causes water pollution" as the most important reason to pick it up has fluctuated but remains the third most common reason.

Consistent with the past five years, almost a third of 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, 18 percent fertilize in the spring and only seven percent fertilize 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.

Among those who fertilize their lawn, 70 percent have never had or were not sure if their soil had been tested for fertility or pH and fifty nine percent reported using a slow release fertilizer.

Consistent with the past five years, the majority of respondents take their vehicle to a service station for oil changes (79%) or take used oil to a gas station or hazmat facility for recycling (13%). Three percent of Northern Virginians reported storing used motor oil in their garage, placing it in the trash or dumping it down the storm drain.

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Down the
Drain
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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 | Northern Virginia Community College |
Fairfax County Public Schools | Prince William County Public Schools | Northern Virginia Soil and
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