

## **Section 4. Public Education Plan (PEP) Report**

The PEP section 4 of our Stormwater Management Plan was developed to promote, publicize, and facilitate watershed education in the Middle Huron area. Following is a summary of the progress made on PEP implementation.

The Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC) has provided information covering collaborative activities (#1-10, #12, #19 and the Evaluation of Effectiveness Summary) for the period September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2023 unless otherwise indicated. Other county-wide activities are described below for reference with county progress reports for these or similar activities submitted on a reporting schedule required by the county's permit (Washtenaw County permit issued 2017).

### **Activity #1: HRWC and/or Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water Informational Materials**

Individual jurisdictions distributed brochures, tip cards, posters, and other materials developed by the Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC), Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) and other agencies. The materials contain information that covers required Topics 1-8.

In informational web page and tip cards directed to the public on “what you can do with” household hazardous waste, storm drains, landscaping, pet care, lawn care and car care are available from SEMCOG. The overall campaign promotes key messages on proper use of fertilizer, car care, landscaping, storm drain awareness, household hazardous wastes, water conservation, pet care, and riparian protection. See <https://semcog.org/protect-our-waterways>.

In 2019 the Freshwater Forum at Cranbrook, Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) and SEMCOG developed a “One Water” regional water resource public outreach campaign. See <https://semcog.org/mionewater>. Goals included fostering stewardship, encouraging citizens to adopt best practices to protect water resources and infrastructure at the household level, and supporting long-term investments in water. The project produced and coordinated messaging and delivery of outreach materials for use by SEMCOG's members and Partners for Clean Water, GLWA customers, and other interested groups. Educational messages were also rolled out at a regional level simultaneously through social media, websites, videos, radio, TV, outdoor advertising, and print-based methods. Primary campaign topics included water resources in the Great Lakes: drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, and natural resources that are connected to water resource priorities. The campaign was updated in 2020 and 2021.

SEMCOG's Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water Annual Reports are available here: <https://semcog.org/stormwater>.

HRWC's public outreach content (includes tips, resources and printable fact sheets and brochures on preventing water pollution) is located at <https://www.hrwc.org/take-action/at-home/> on the following topics: landscaping (native plants, trees and rain gardens) lawn and garden (fertilizing, lawn care, fall leaf cleanup), household and pet waste, water efficiency and

conservation, driveways and walkways, and riverfront and lake shore properties. These and additional materials are also provided to permittees participating in the Middle Huron Partnership in an online project collaboration tool (Trello). HRWC also distributes them at its offices and at public outreach events (See Activity #12).

In 2021 HRWC published an educational [Huron River Watershed Map Poster](#), distributing it to residents in person and by mail. This print poster is a scale map that shows watershed boundaries, creeksheds (24), Trail Towns (5), lakes and ponds, the Natural River District, State Parks, Metroparks and local parks, dams on the main stem of the river, watershed high and low points and the start point for the Huron River Water Trial. It also includes pollution prevention messaging. HRWC distributes the poster by direct mail, at its offices and at public outreach events (see Activity #12).

**Ypsilanti Township**

The Township maintains a supply of Tip Cards and Public Education materials developed by HRWC and SEMCOG. These handouts are available for pickup at displays at the Township Civic Center, Community Center, and on the Township’s website. The Township also has copies of public education materials available at various events throughout the year.

**Activity #2: Community Watershed Calendar**

During the reporting period HRWC and participating communities produced, printed, and distributed a 2022 and a 2023 Huron River Watershed Community Calendar. Each presents a full year of monthly informational pollution prevention tips targeted to homeowners in a single printed piece. A 2024 calendar is in production for distribution starting in October 2032. The tips and provided resources are related to permit topic requirements such as illegal dumping, fertilizer and yard care, rain barrels, pet waste, car care, rain gardens and native plants, home toxics, storm drain awareness and general watershed education.

Participating communities distributed calendars in the fall to residents either by direct mail, at customer service counters and local venues or through other means. HRWC provided/will provide communities with the following quantities of calendars:

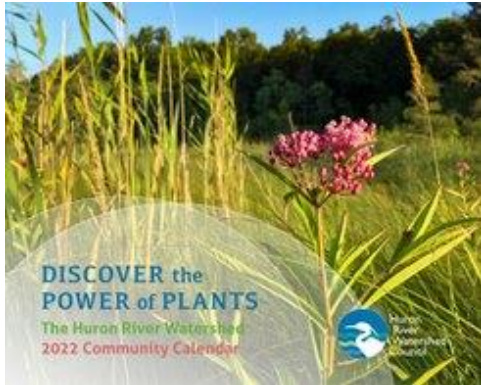
<b>Community</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024 (planned)</b>
Ann Arbor Charter Township	300	200	200
Ann Arbor Public Schools	1300	1300	1100
Barton Hills Village	150	150	150
Brighton Township	50	50	100
City of Ann Arbor*	22142	28377	28377
City of Belleville	120	120	120
City of Brighton	200	2200**	200
City of Chelsea	150	150	150

City of Dexter*	2629	2677	2677
City of Ypsilanti*	100	1000	4138
City of Wixom			100
Eastern Michigan University	500	500	500
Green Oak Township*	442	446	446
Hamburg Township	200	100	200
Huron River Watershed Council	500	760	893
Huron Clinton Metroparks	649	700	700
Livingston County Drain Commissioner	500	500	600
Livingston County Road Commission	50	150	100
Pittsfield Charter Township	700	700	700
Putnam Township	300	300	300
Scio Township	300	300	400
Superior Charter Township	700	850	1000
University of Michigan, Environment, Health & Safety	200	250	300
VA Ann Arbor Health Care System	120	120	200
Village of Milford			2999
Village of Pinckney	450	400	
Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner	600	400	400
Washtenaw County Road Commission	200	150	150
Ypsilanti Charter Township	500	500	1000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34952</b>	<b>43400</b>	<b>48200</b>

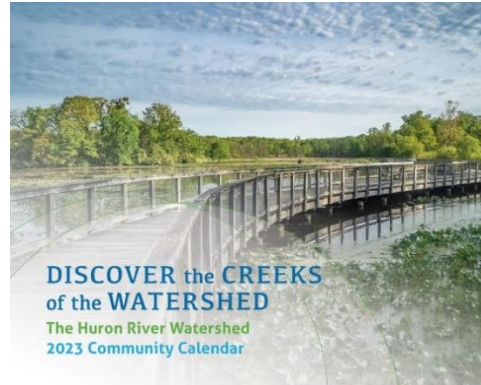
\*Direct mailed all or part

\*\* HRWC Resident Survey direct mail group in 2023

HRWC distributed calendars through direct mail, at key organizational events and in person, promoting it through HRWC's marketing emails (avg 8,200 recipients), home page (4,690 monthly average users), and social media announcements on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram profiles (8,481 followers as of August 31, 2023).



[2022 Community Calendar](#)



[2023 Community Calendar](#)

### **Activity #3: Information in Community Newsletters and on Websites**

Seasonal newsletter inserts of tips and information on nonpoint source pollution prevention topics are developed by HRWC and were made available for community use on [www.hrwc.org](http://www.hrwc.org) until January 2019 when they transitioned to an online project collaboration tool (Trello) with access provided to participating Middle Huron Partners.

These materials also include a series of 12 advertisements in various sizes and formats (jpeg, pdf) that correspond to the Watershed Community Calendar branding, monthly topics and messaging.

There are four tip sheets, that HRWC posts to its website and distributes by email or at in-person events:

- Pet Waste, <https://www.hrwc.org/wp-content/uploads/HRWC-Pet-Waste-Tip-Sheet.pdf>
- Septic Systems, <https://www.hrwc.org/wp-content/uploads/HRWC-Septic-System-Tip-Sheet.pdf>
- Native Plants and Rain Gardens, <https://www.hrwc.org/wp-content/uploads/HRWC-Native-Plants-Tip-Sheet.pdf>
- Lawn Care, <https://www.hrwc.org/wp-content/uploads/HRWC-Lawn-Care-Tip-Sheets.pdf>

HRWC publishes announcements, articles, tips and promotions that focus on nonpoint source pollution prevention and water quality information using the following distribution channels:

- Website-[www.hrwc.org](http://www.hrwc.org) (71,149 sessions with 117,000 views overall with 50,188 new users).\*
- Facebook-@HuronRiver (4436 followers); Instagram-@HuronRiver (1,909 followers); Twitter-@hrwc (1,301 followers) as of the end of the reporting period August 31, 2023.
- Monthly e-mail newsletter (8,200 average monthly contacts with an average open rate of 36.17%).
- Printed quarterly newsletter the [Huron River Report](#) (direct mailed to over 2,000 HRWC members and distributed to the following watershed libraries: Huron High School, Ann

Arbor District, South Lyon, Milford, Chelsea, Belleville, Flat Rock, Pinckney, Ypsilanti District, Brighton Public, Dexter District).

The homeowner pollution prevention tips web pages at [www.hrwc.org/take-action/at-home](http://www.hrwc.org/take-action/at-home) had the following results: 3,044 total sessions (page views) with 2,570 total users (unique page views).\* The content on these pages is available for permittees to publish and distribute in their own communications channels.

The most popular page, resulting in 57% of the total sessions recorded was [www.hrwc.org/take-action/at-home/lawn-garden](http://www.hrwc.org/take-action/at-home/lawn-garden), the landing page containing information and resources for gardening with native plants, rain gardens, trees and rain barrels. Other popular pages: [www.hrwc.org/take-action/at-home/driveway-and-walkways](http://www.hrwc.org/take-action/at-home/driveway-and-walkways), 12% of total sessions and <https://www.hrwc.org/take-action/at-home/household-pet-waste/>, 8% of total sessions.

\* Data is from November 1, 2022 through August 31, 2023 (when GA4 at HRWC.org was implemented).

#### **Activity #4: Local Newspaper and Web Advertisements**

In 2022, HRWC provided communities with a 12-month week-by-week social media campaign of digital graphics, cut-and-paste ready text, hashtags, links and stormwater pollution prevention posts for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram as follows: Jan – Home Toxics, Feb – Microplastics, March – Tree Planting, April – Native Plants, May – Rain Gardens, June – Lawn Care & Fertilizing, July – Safe Driveway Sealants, August – Illegal Dumping, September – Storm Drain, October – Mulch, November Pet Waste, December – Shovel Early, Salt out of Streams. Additionally HRWC distributed the campaign on social media channels using boosted posts and ad buys. For ads targeting zip codes in Washtenaw County, the ad buys gathered 285,704 impressions. The campaigns ended February 28, 2023.

Ads resemble and reinforce the Watershed Community Calendar messaging, using the hashtag #h2ohero and promoting the dedicated campaign web site, [www.hrwc.org/h2oheroes](http://www.hrwc.org/h2oheroes) which is directed to HRWC's homeowner focused pollution prevention content and contains detailed information and additional resources.

May-June 2021 HRWC, the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office and the City of Ann Arbor worked with the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) to produce an educational video series featuring community leaders promoting watershed and pollution prevention awareness. See also Activity #1. Six [One Water educational videos](#) were created and published in July to HRWC's YouTube channel on the following topics: stormwater benefits of trees, proper disposal of pet waste; proper disposal of wipes, FOGs and prescriptions; storm drain connection to waterbodies; benefits of native plants and rain gardens; benefits of river cleanups. A social media campaign in July-August 2021 delivered the videos and messaging to watershed audiences. 3,810 people saw the campaign on Facebook and Instagram (reach), resulting in 260 engagements (likes, reactions, comments, shares, clicks).

May-August 2021 HRWC produced an educational short [video series “Field Day Friday”](#) featuring staff members answering frequently asked questions about the watershed. Videos posted to Facebook and InstagramTV weekly on Fridays. 16 videos were created on a variety of topics including wildlife, stream monitoring, PFAS, recreation, swimming, native plants and rain gardens and more. 3,701 people saw the campaign on Facebook (reach), resulting in 344 engagements (likes, reactions, comments, shares, clicks).

**Ypsilanti Township**

The Township provides water quality and storm water information to residents through YCUA (water and sewer billing) mailers. This information reaches approximately 7,700 households 6 times a year. The Township also provides water quality and storm water information to residents through the Recreation Guide, Township News (2-3 times a year), and YTown News email mailing list.

**Activity #5: Promote Water Resource Protection Workshops**

HRWC also coordinated and promoted the following events/workshops incorporating water quality and nonpoint source pollution prevention information and/or materials:

<b>Workshops</b>
Change Makers Boot Camp, Lower Middle Huron, November 2021
Change Makers Boot Camp, Upper Middle Huron, November 2021
Change Makers Boot Camp, Belleville, February 2023
Change Makers Boot Camp, Virtual, March 2023
Chemistry and Flow Monitoring Orientation, March 2022, 2023
Huron River Water Trail Paddle Trips (Ann Arbor, Milford, Oakwoods Metropark) Summer 2022
Huckin for the Huron with Schultz Outfitters 2022, 2023
Insect ID Day, May 2022, 2023 and October 2021, 2022
Improving Profitability and Land Stewardship: Lessons from Washtenaw County, (farmer audience) December 2021
Malletts Creek Coordinating Committee Meetings, Monthly 2021, 2022, 2023
Master Rain Gardener Certification Class, March 2022, 2023
Protecting our Watershed: Keeping our Rivers Clean and Healthy Webinar, December 2021
River Cleanup Milford, August 2022
River Cleanup Hudson Mills, August 2022
River Cleanup Ypsilanti, September 2022, 2023
HRWC River Givers Community Gathering, March 2021, May 2022 and December 2023
HRWC River Roundup Volunteer Stream Monitoring, April and October, 2021, 2022, 2023
HRWC Suds on the River, September 2021, 2022, 2023
Winter Stonefly Search, January 2022, 2023
Tree Planting in Ypsilanti with HRWC and Washtenaw Conservation District, April 2022
Washtenaw County Native Plant Expo, June 2022, 2023

Each year Washtenaw County with support from the City of Ann Arbor, hosts Master Rain Gardener certification classes in-person and/or online. Master Rain Gardeners are trained to design and build rain gardens, and to serve as neighborhood educators. In 2022 and 2023 the course was offered collaboratively with partners such as HRWC and Friends of the Rouge for residents across the Southeast Michigan region. See [www.MasterRainGardener.org](http://www.MasterRainGardener.org).

### **Ypsilanti Township**

Township board members meet monthly with staff from WCWRC to share information, including upcoming events and workshops. The Township Engineer, Matt Parks, meets on the first Tuesday of each month with WCWRC staff members.

The Township regularly meets with residents on a monthly basis at board meetings as well. The Township also attends with the Neighborhood Watch Group meetings held each month. This provides Township staff with the opportunity to discuss upcoming watershed events, Township services, and a venue for question-and-answer sessions with residents.

### **Activity #6: Promote and Support Volunteer Stream Monitoring**

Each year, HRWC hosted several activities or monitoring events that inspire the protection of local fresh-water resources. One event measures the physical conditions (described below) and the other event (“biomonitoring”) measures the aquatic invertebrate community.

In biomonitoring events, held in January (Stonefly Search), April (River Roundup) and October (River Roundup), volunteers spend the day as part of a small research team, examining the conditions of two streams. Streams are selected to be strikingly different in quality. Each team collects samples of creatures (macroinvertebrates). They notice immediately that one stream is teeming with life while the other appears nearly “dead.” This comparative difference is an effective way for residents to discover for themselves that some local streams have deteriorated while others remain healthy which leads to inquiry about the causes of stream deterioration, the conditions of their local stream, and possible solutions. HRWC attempts to visit 25 locations per event (3x per year). In the reporting period September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2023, we collected 125 samples at these unique locations. Including identification days, this was all accomplished by 596 volunteer shifts (some individuals participate in more than one event), for a total of 2714 hours of service.

A follow-up report by HRWC responds to volunteer concerns by providing results of the monitoring events and an explanation of the primary causes of local stream deterioration, tools to address local stream issues and tip sheets or information for homeowners and other residents on protecting water quality.

Annually in the summer interns measure the physical conditions of streams. They learn to “read a river” by studying the conditions that affect the ecological health of the sites. Interns are local college students that are aiming to become professionals in environmental and/or field work. These outings give them the basics to start those careers. In the summers of 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 interns collected geomorphological data, which supports the Middle Huron

Watershed Management Plans, and they helped collect and process water samples for E. coli, a priority pollutant in the Middle Huron River watershed.

HRWC's program serves the entire watershed, a 900-square mile area that drains into the Huron River and then into Lake Erie. The area includes approximately 650,000 residents and parts of seven counties in Southeast Michigan, primarily Livingston, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties. The pool of volunteers, who live in many of the 67 watershed communities, is currently around 400, with up to 100 routinely participating in each event. HRWC has successfully drawn volunteers from throughout the watershed.

Additionally, HRWC operates a Chemistry and Flow Monitoring Program on behalf of partners in Washtenaw, Livingston and Wayne counties. This program, which utilizes volunteer sample collectors, is described in more detail in the document named Section 8 – WQ Report.docx.

### **Ypsilanti Township**

The Township promotes the HRWC and WCWRC programs through public education information on display at the Township Civic Center, Community Center, and through their website.

#### **Activity #7: Catch Basin/Storm Drain Labeling (for communities with storm sewers)**

Storm drain awareness is a priority for public education efforts of stormwater phase I and II regulated communities. Historically, many communities have labeled and marked storm drains with language that explains that they go directly to the local surface waters. This effort was usually combined with the distribution of door hangers that provided more detailed information about stormwater, non-point source pollution and the proper disposal of motor oil, grass clippings, pet waste, and other pollutants. With many of the urban storm drains now labeled/marked, the effort has shifted to maintenance by local street or public works staff.

In 2010 the Middle Huron Stormwater Advisory Group members began development of an Adopt-A-Storm-Drain program for key areas of Washtenaw County. The program is designed to recruit public and private partners to take sustained action to keep storm drains labeled, clear and clean by working with a committed group of individuals. These volunteers also report problems to the local governments and serve as neighborhood advocates and educators.

HRWC developed the program format and structure, creating waivers, intake and reporting forms, instructions and tips, etc. See <https://www.hrwc.org/volunteer/adoptastormdrain/>. Volunteers participated in the program by clearing debris from and applying new “Dump No Waste, Drains to River” markers to storm drains and distributing informational door hangers to nearby neighborhood residences.

During the reporting period, September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2023, 17 of HRWC's experienced volunteers submitted the program's online form to adopt a neighborhood storm



drain. Also, there were 1,972 page views of the program landing page with 1,056 people visiting the page.

### **Ypsilanti Township**

The Township owns and operates approximately 75 catch basins. All of these basins have been labeled with decals “No Dumping...Drains to River”.

### **Activity #8: Promote County-Wide Complaint Tracking and Response System**

The Washtenaw County Environmental Reporting Line (734-222-3800) is in operation during business hours (Monday-Friday, 8:30 to 5:00) and staffed by the Washtenaw County Environmental Health Division. Emergencies are directed to 9-1-1. In addition, online reporting of non-emergency issues is available 24/7 at <https://washtenaw.org/196/Report-an-Issue>. The Environmental Reporting Line is promoted on the website and hard copy information is also periodically distributed at the Western Service Center and upon request.

### **Ypsilanti Township**

The Township promotes use of the County Reporting Line by providing brochures at the Township Civic Center and Community Center and via information posted on their website.

### **Activity #9: Promote Soil Testing**

Beginning January 1, 2012, phosphorus fertilizer applications are restricted on residential and commercial lawns in Michigan, including athletic fields and golf courses statewide. This includes applications by both homeowners and commercial applicators.

The general rule in the Michigan Fertilizer Law is no phosphorus fertilizer may be applied on residential or commercial lawns, unless it meets an exemption. The sale of phosphorus fertilizers in the marketplace is not impacted. Phosphorus applications for agriculture, gardens, trees, and shrubs are exempted. In 2011 HRWC participated in a phosphorus fertilizer workgroup coordinated by the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (MDARD). MDARD produced a homeowner brochure and additional phosphorus information. In 2012, the soil testing program transitioned to a web-based mail in program run by MSU Extension where consumers were directed to purchase (\$25) a soil test kit, mail-in their samples and get results by email which they then plug into a website tool for interpretation.

HRWC promotes soil testing and the “go phosphorus free” message to the public as part of healthy lawn and garden practices in the Watershed Community Calendar (Activity #2), Information in Community Newsletters and on Websites (Activity #3), and Local Newspaper and Web Advertisements (Activity #4). See the lawn and garden tip sheet distributed digitally and in print that promotes both soil testing and the use of phosphorus-free fertilizer:

<https://www.hrwc.org/wp-content/uploads/HRWC-Lawn-Care-Tip-Sheets.pdf>

During the reporting period a total of 2,295 pageviews were recorded on HRWC’s lawn and garden landing page <https://www.hrwc.org/take-action/at-home/lawn-care/>, where fertilizer

information and soil testing is promoted as a topic [www.hrwc.org/take-action/at-home/lawn-care/#fertilize-phosphorus-free](http://www.hrwc.org/take-action/at-home/lawn-care/#fertilize-phosphorus-free)

### **Ypsilanti Township**

The Township has a Manufactured Fertilizer Ordinance (Ordinance No. 2009-392) regulating the application of fertilizer in the Township. Soil tests are required for any application of phosphorus containing fertilizer. This ordinance is publicized via the Township website and brochures.

### **Activity #10: Riparian Land Management Brochures**

In 2014 HRWC produced a 12-page booklet, “Waterfront Wisdom, 7 tips for creating and maintaining a beautiful and healthy waterfront,” an updated adaptation of a booklet designed by Environmental Consulting & Technology and published by the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner. A series of tips web pages have also been posted with information and resources for shoreline property owners on shoreline buffers, aquatic invasive species, preventing soil erosion, and benefits of keeping boats clean. See, <https://www.hrwc.org/wp-content/uploads/HRWC-Waterfront-Wisdom-Web.pdf>.

These materials were developed and printed for the outreach requirements of the Portage Creek Implementation Project funded in part through the Michigan Nonpoint Source Program by the US Environmental Protection Agency under the Clean Water Act, assistance agreement C995474-12.

HRWC and participating communities printed an additional 2,400 booklets (not funded by the Michigan Nonpoint Source Program) for distribution to riparian landowners outside of the Portage Creek project area.

In December 2015 the Livingston Watershed Advisory Group also printed and direct mailed 2,390 booklets along with a short evaluative survey to owners of residential parcels on lakes in the Huron River Watershed greater than 10 acres.

During the reporting period a total of 927 pageviews (490 individuals) were recorded on HRWC’s riverfront and lakeshore properties landing page <https://www.hrwc.org/take-action/at-home/riverfront-lakeshore-properties/> where the booklet is available for download. The landing page also contains information and resources for shoreline property owners on the following topics: shoreline buffers, preventing soil erosion, preventing the spread of invasive species and keeping boat and gear clean.

Additionally, during the reporting period HRWC distributed print materials (promotional postcards for the Michigan’s Shoreland Stewards program, the Michigan Natural Shoreline partnership and “Shoreline Living” magazine, and shoreline tip cards from Michigan State University Extension) at targeted public events such as the Washtenaw Home, Garden & Lifestyle Show, the Chelsea Expo, Washtenaw Native Plant Expo and the Brighton Farmers Market (see Activity #12).

**Activity #11: Stream and River Crossing Road Signs**

Through a partnership with the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner’s Office, Washtenaw County Road Commission and local governments, 59 stream crossing signs were previously designed, produced and installed in highly traveled Phase II County road rights-of-way areas to promote watershed awareness to residents and visitors. Since then, the Washtenaw County Road Commission regularly installs “Protect our Streams & Rivers Signs and stream/drain name signs.

**Activity #12: Displays and Outreach at Local and Regional Fairs and Community Events**

HRWC coordinates and staffs watershed information displays and outreach activities at the following regional events many of which are held annually:

<b>Community Events</b>
Ann Arbor Earth Day, April 2022, 2023
Ann Arbor Waste Water Treatment Plant Open House, October 2022
Ann Arbor Water Treatment Plant Open House, May 2022, 2023
Brighton Farmers Market, July and September 2023
Belleville Lake Fest, June 2023
Chelsea Spring Expo, April 2022
Dexter Daze, August 2023
Fly Fishing Film Tour, February 2022
Huron River Day, 2022, 2023
Mayors Ann Arbor Green Fair June 2022, October 2022, 2023
Milford Utilities Open House, September 2023
Parkridge Summer Fest and Joe Dulin Community Day, August 2023
Quiet Adventures Symposium, March 2022 (virtual), 2023 (in person)
Romulus Eco Fair, April 2023
University of Michigan EarthFest, September 2021, 2022, 2023
Washtenaw Home, Garden & Lifestyle Show, March 2022, 2023
Washtenaw Zero Waste Coalition Trash Talk Tour, September 2022
West Bloomfield Earth Day, April 2022, 2023
Ypsi Earth Day, April 2023
Ypsi Fall River Day, September 2022, 2023

**Activity # 13: Community Partners for Clean Streams**

The Community Partners for Clean Streams (CPCS) program is a voluntary, cooperative partnership between local businesses and organizations and the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office. The goal of the program is to help identify practical, cost-effective ways to protect our waterways through pollution prevention at businesses/organizations in the County. Partners receive free information, technical advice, and recognition. There are currently over 150 partners in the program. For additional information visit: <https://www.washtenaw.org/409/Community-Partners-for-Clean-Streams>.



### **Ypsilanti Township**

Ypsilanti Township is a registered participant for the Community Partners for Clean Streams.

### **Activity #14: Pollution Prevention Inspections**

Washtenaw County Pollution Prevention (P2) Inspections review chemical storage/handling practices, look for illicit connections, ensure compliance with relevant federal, state, and local laws and provide a report and technical assistance where remediation is necessary. The Washtenaw County Environmental Health Division administers the program and conducts these inspections. See <https://www.washtenaw.org/1573/Pollution-Prevention>.

The Washtenaw County Pollution Prevention Regulation paused for a period of up to 2 years (potentially until March 4, 2024), including submission of reports, status sheets, and fees, and performance of routine inspections. Facilities were not required to submit status sheet updates, reports, or new fees to the Washtenaw County Health Department in 2022 or 2023. Instead, the program encouraged businesses to use this time to consider updates to the program.

Program staff will review the current regulation and look for gaps and duplications in the local, state, and federal regulatory framework. They will also engage community members, partners, and our regulated businesses to find out what aspects of the program they feel are important to protect their employees, their environment, and their community.

### **Ypsilanti Township**

The Township previously developed Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans for the Golf Course/Community Center, Civic Center Maintenance Garage, and Compost Center.

### **Activity #15: Green Media**

Washtenaw County highlights local environmental issues impacting our community using two green media channels:

**“Issues of the Environment” Radio Show (WEMU – 89.1 FM)** is a weekly radio program on 89.1 WEMU hosted by David Fair and sponsored by the Washtenaw County Public Works Division and the Water Resources Commissioner's Office. In 2020, the show celebrated its 25th

year on the air. 100 shows aired from September 2021 through August 2023. Examples of the many water-quality related topics include:

- Takeaways from Washtenaw County's '500-year, 3-hour storm
- 10-year, \$100-million Ann Arbor water treatment plant project getting underway
- New study highlights exposure risks in Ann Arbor basements from the Gelman Sciences 1,4 dioxane plume
- The latest on the chemical contamination of the Huron River
- Ongoing work for safe and affordable water in Michigan
- Protecting Washtenaw County's waters in the season of campfires and wood-burning
- Does Michigan Need A Statewide Code For Septic Systems?
- Planning Ann Arbor's water future



A complete listing of program topics can be found online at <https://www.washtenaw.org/340/Issues-of-the-Environment---Radio> including past interviews.

**“The Green Room” Television Show** is a collaboration between the City of Ann Arbor's Community Television Network (CTN), the Washtenaw County Public Works Division and the Water Resources Commissioner's Office. Seven (7) television shows aired between September 2021 and August 2023. Each new episode begins airing on the second Tuesday of the month on Channel 16, and continues to air throughout the month, typically 4-6 times per week. The show is also available for streaming online from the CTN webpages and/or YouTube. The show is produced by Barbara Lucas and Tim Nagae. A complete listing of episodes and the topics covered can be found online at: <https://www.washtenaw.org/365/TV-Show>.

### **Ypsilanti Township**

The Township staff issues press releases and is regularly interviewed by members of the press for news articles and promotion of special Township events such as Heritage Festival, Ypsi Pride Day, and household hazardous waste collection days.

### **Activity #16: Environmental Excellence Awards**

The Environmental Excellence Awards recognize businesses and organizations taking additional actions to protect the environment. Award categories include: Water Quality Protection, Waste Reduction & Recycling, and Pollution Prevention. The award event to recognize winners is in general held annually. Advertisements, articles, press releases, and website postings are also used to recognize award winners. Visit the website for additional information at: <https://www.washtenaw.org/415/Awards>.

### **Activity #17: Fats, Oils, and Grease and Litter Reduction**

The Community Partners for Clean Streams program highlights proper disposal of fats, oils, and grease (FOG) in the CPCS Handbook. Food service educational materials are available to educate restaurants about FOG disposal and clean-up procedures. These packages typically

include the CPCS Handbook, a FOG brochure, and a FOG hauler listing. Customers are primarily directed to the electronic information rather than providing physical documents.

The County websites with FOG information include: <https://www.washtenaw.org/838/Fats-Oils-Grease> and <https://washtenaw.org/1567/Fats-Oils-Grease-FOG>.

### **Ypsilanti Township**

Ypsilanti Township is served by YCUA and utilizes their FOG requirements through their Sewer Use Ordinance.

### **Activity #18: River Safe Homes Program**

The River Safe Homes Program began in 2007 and continues to offer Washtenaw County residents (<https://www.washtenaw.org/riversafe>), user-friendly water quality protection information online that is geared to homeowners. Participants take an online survey to assess how the pollution prevention activities they already do and pledge to do can protect and improve water quality around their homes. The topics covered in the survey include:

- Lawn Care
- Car Care
- Proper Pet Waste Disposal
- Household Hazardous Waste Disposal

Upon satisfactory completion of the survey, participants receive a “RiverSafe Home” logo (window cling) that may be displayed at their home. The purpose of the logo is to inform visitors about the water quality protection activities and commitment made by the homeowners who live there. A hard copy RiverSafe Home booklet and survey are also available for residents who do not have internet access. For River Safe Homes program information see: <https://mi-washtenawcounty.civicplus.com/632/Green-Living>.

The City of Ann Arbor partners with the WCWRC’s Office to promote River Safe Homes by offering a Residential Stormwater Credit program for residents within the City. See <https://www.a2gov.org/departments/systems-planning/planning-areas/water-resources/stormwater/Pages/Residential-Stormwater-Credits.aspx>.

### **Ypsilanti Township**

The Township encourages homeowners to participate in the RiverSafe Homeowners Program through promotion brochures.

### **Activity #19: Other Public Education Activities Related Specifically to E. coli and phosphorus TMDLs**

HRWC regularly publishes articles in its newsletter the Huron River Report that feature issues related to E. coli and phosphorus TMDLs. The Huron River Report can be found here: <https://www.hrwc.org/about/newsletters/>. It is produced three times each year and direct mailed to approximately 2,000 print subscribers and emailed to 8,000-plus digital subscribers.

Huron River Report articles are also posted individually to HRWC’s website as blogs. The blogs include the re-published newsletter articles, but also feature additional topics. Blogs are shared via HRWC’s social media channels—Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn and emailed to HRWC’s list of 8,000-plus subscribers.

Huron River Report articles related to these topics during the reporting period included the following:

- Protecting Natural Shorelines, These riparian habitats are critical for lake and river health (Fall 2023)
- Helping Willow Metropark, Naturally, Projects tackle shoreline erosion and restore a creek (Summer 2023)
- Innovation on the Farm, Reducing phosphorus runoff while increasing profits with Whole Farms for Clean Water (Fall 2022)
- The Clean Water Act’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Summer 2022)
- Twenty Years of Volunteer Water Sampling, Chemistry and Flow program grows and changes (Summer 2022)
- Digital Data Collection, Upgrading our monitoring programs (Spring 2022)
- Sowing Seeds for the Huron, Local farmer collaborations are conserving soil, land and water quality (Fall 2021)
- HRWC adapts monitoring programs and more to engage supporters (Summer 2021)
- Keeping Stormwater Running Clean, HRWC supports collaborative stormwater management (Summer 2021)
- Crossing Watershed Boundaries, HRWC collaborates with Southeast Michigan river groups (Spring 2021)
- Protecting the Middle Huron, Top ten recommendations set to achieve healthy water (Spring 2021)
- Keeping Stormwater Running Clean, HRWC supports collaborative stormwater management (Summer 2021)

Related blog posts at <https://www.hrwc.org/blog/> include:

- <https://www.hrwc.org/chemflow2022/> (Chemistry and Flow Monitoring Concludes Stellar Season) November 8, 2022
- <https://www.hrwc.org/rain-gardens-in-our-watershed/>, February 17, 2022
- <https://www.hrwc.org/fall-2021-river-roundup-results-reviewed/>, January 26, 2022
- <https://www.hrwc.org/fall-river-roundup-a-new-normal/>, October 12, 2021
- <https://www.hrwc.org/2021-stonefly-search-results/>, March 25, 2021
- <https://www.hrwc.org/lights-camera-analyze/>, October 20, 2020
- <https://www.hrwc.org/trees-and-forests-fight-climate-change-and-water-pollution/>, April 7, 2020

- <https://www.hrwc.org/working-with-impact-downriver-chemistry-and-flow-monitoring/>, February 20, 2020
- <https://www.hrwc.org/chemistry-and-flow-2019-season/>, November 4, 2019
- <https://www.hrwc.org/hrwc-launches-whole-farms-for-clean-water/>, August 19, 2019

### **Activity #20: Residential Rain Garden Program**

Rain gardens are shallow gardens filled with beautiful native plants that collect rainwater and runoff and let it soak into the ground naturally. This helps to clean the water, protect waterways, and reduce flooding. Rain gardens also create healthy habitats for wildlife, birds, and pollinators. These benefits are taught in detail to adults and children throughout the County.

Since 2005 rain gardens have been designed and installed at residential, church, and institutional properties through the Washtenaw County Residential Rain Garden Program. The project was initiated as a Clean Water Act 319 grant but has since been funded by both the County and the City of Ann Arbor and periodically by a grant from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy (formerly MDEQ). Program staff work with homeowners to plan, design, and install rain gardens. Since then, homeowners have learned how to install rain gardens through Rain Garden Assistance visits and the Master Rain Gardener program. Today, the Residential Rain Garden Program continues to assist homeowners in creating and installing rain gardens on their property.

Program information is available at <https://www.washtenaw.org/647/Rain-Gardens>.

The Rain Garden Program also offers Master Rain Gardener training and certification. Participants design their own rain garden during class, becoming the rain garden expert in their neighborhood. Master Rain Gardeners help friends and neighbors to learn about, design and plant rain gardens. Participants earn a certificate by taking the class and building a rain garden.

A free recorded 5-part Master Rain Gardener Class has been available on demand since 2020. Live virtual classes and in person classes are also offered (see activity #5 above). Program information is found at <https://www.washtenaw.org/675/Master-Rain-Gardener-Class>.

### **Ypsilanti Township**

The Township encourages low impact development through their site plan review process, and is in the process of updating engineering standards which include stormwater regulations, BMPs, infiltration basins, etc.

### **Activity #21: Washtenaw County Home Toxics Reduction Program**

#### *County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events*

The Washtenaw County Home Toxics Center (Reduction Program) has a permanent facility at 705 N. Zeeb Road that accepts household hazardous waste from the citizens of Washtenaw County. Examples of the household hazardous waste (HHW) materials that are accepted include: paints, aerosols, cleaners, motor oil, cooking oils (vegetable, canola, olive, etc.), pesticides,



herbicides, fertilizers, paint thinner, solvents, varnishes, wood preservatives, mercury, fluorescent light bulbs, and home repair products. A complete listing of the acceptable and non-acceptable items can be found on the program website at <https://washtenaw.org/287/Home-Toxics-Paint-Oil-Pesticides-more>.

Collection facility hours of operation take place the first three Saturdays of the month from 9:00 am until noon beginning in April and ending in November. Weekday home toxics drop offs are available by appointment, year-round, for those citizens unable to use the facility during regularly scheduled collection days.

In 2020, the global pandemic impacted not only our day-to-day lives but also our services to residents. With more time at home, people cleaned out their home and garages and brought us more home toxics than ever before. Our Zero Waste Events and some Clean-Up Days were cancelled. In response, we moved online with virtual school recycling programs, created online scheduling for Home Toxics Center appointments, and launched an interactive medication disposal map.

In addition to the Saturday collection events, Clean-up Days to collect Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) are regularly held in cooperation with the Washtenaw County Solid Waste Division, and local municipalities and universities.

Information on HHW collected is available in the Washtenaw County Solid Waste Program Annual Reports.

2021: <https://www.washtenaw.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/1176>

2022: <https://www.washtenaw.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/1213>

#### *Waste Knot Program*

The Waste Knot Program works to develop relationships within the Washtenaw County business community to increase waste reduction and recycling activities. The program provides community-wide recognition and organization-based technical assistance along with value-added education to organizations that exhibit leadership in waste reduction and recycling or to organizations that desire to become leaders in waste reduction and recycling. Currently there are over 300 businesses participating in the program.



For more information, please visit the Waste Knot Program website at <https://www.washtenaw.org/e2p2>.

#### **Ypsilanti Township**

The Township provides information on available HHW collection and disposal, including the County's events and programs, via their website.

#### **Activity #22: Proper Disposal of Prescription Drugs and Personal Care Products/Pharmacy Drug Take-Back Program**

The Medication Take-Back Program currently consists of nineteen (19) participating pharmacies and nine (9) Big Red Barrel locations at Police & Sheriff locations that serve as collection points for the general public to take unused, expired or unwanted medicines for safe disposal.

The County's website [www.dontflushdrugs.com](http://www.dontflushdrugs.com) includes disposal locations and information on:

- Medication Disposal Network Map
- Pharmacy Take-Back Program
- Big Red Barrel Program
- Sharps Disposal Directory
- EGLE's Drug Disposal Minute (video)
- Other Disposal Locations – State Police, Lenawee County, Livingston County, Oakland County and the Michigan Pharmacists Association

### **Evaluation of Effectiveness Summary**

Evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the PEP consists of a combination of both the accumulated measures of the effectiveness of the PEP's individual activities (shown above) and a measure of the effectiveness of the sum of all the activities through a carefully developed coordinated survey that was conducted by HRWC for the permittees in 2012. "Small Actions Upstream, A study of public attitudes toward freshwater resources and pollution prevention in the Huron River watershed," results are reported here: <https://www.hrwc.org/wp-content/uploads/PEP-Survey-Report-FINAL.pdf>

During the current reporting period, HRWC distributed a Watershed Resident Survey to better understand what people think about water quality issues, if stormwater public education initiatives are reaching target communities, and if these initiatives have an impact on self-reported behaviors. The survey was open from October 1, 2022 through February 15, 2023. 741 people responded. HRWC is analyzing the data. Survey results and the accumulated measures of individual activities (shown above) will provide the basis for measuring the PEP's effectiveness.