

# Horry County Stormwater Advisory Board

## Overview of Stormwater Management

### Roles and Responsibilities

Stormwater Advisory Board members are citizens appointed by County Council according to the County's rules for Boards and Commissions. Members serve as liaison between the Stormwater Department, Council and citizens. The Board meets routinely to discuss trends in stormwater management and research, to analyze the Department's operations, and to guide Department policy.

### Major Initiatives

#### *Drainage*

A primary activity and common citizen request is to maintain or improve public drainage and associated infrastructure, including catch basins, storm sewer pipes, major ditches, and regional ponds. Significant personnel and equipment are dedicated to this initiative.

#### *Permitting*

New development can impact downstream flooding and water quality. The Department operates a stormwater permitting program that aims to reduce impacts of development by setting and enforcing standards for the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff.

#### *Education and Outreach*

The Department educates citizens and businesses about how they can help to protect our waterways from stormwater runoff. The county has partnered with other local governments and education providers to form the Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium.

#### *Mosquito Control*

Due to its connection to water, mosquito control is a responsibility of the Stormwater Department. The County expends significant resources to control mosquitoes by aerial sprayings, truck and ATV treatments, and larvicide applications. Strict procedures govern when and how treatments are applied. Citizens with health concerns or beekeeping operations can request exclusions.

#### *Environmental Compliance*

South Carolina has designated Horry County under Phase II stormwater rules of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) of the federal Clean Water Act. The county is responsible for ensuring compliance with environmental regulations that are designed to protect the nation's waterways, such as illegal discharge and post-construction runoff control.

#### *Utility Fee*

In 2000, the County established its first stormwater ordinance and an associated utility fee to pay for capital improvements and major initiatives. The utility fee is based upon the assumption that every property generates stormwater runoff dependent upon the amount of impervious area, and that stormwater runoff eventually reaches public drainage and public waterways. Therefore, every property owner contributes stormwater runoff and should contribute to operation and maintenance of public infrastructure and required stormwater programs.

<http://stormwater.horrycounty.org>

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### *Monitoring and Studies/Research*

To assess the status of Horry County's water resources, the Department invests in various water and climate monitoring programs. The Department also partners in and commissions research and drainage studies to better understand hydrodynamics within the County's drainage basins.

### *Ordinance and Design Manual*

The County has created and enforces a Stormwater Ordinance, which covers many aspects of water quantity and water quality control, with an emphasis on erosion and sediment control. The County also maintains a Design Manual as a reference tool to help guide the development community to meet the stormwater requirements.

### *Frequently Used Stormwater Terms*

NPDES – National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (Clean Water Act)

SMS4 – Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System

NPS – Nonpoint Source Pollution (diffuse sources)

BMP – Best Management Practice (common name for stormwater control devices)

TMDL/303(d) – Total Maximum Daily Load (pollution diet) / Impaired Waters List

### *FAQ's*

What is stormwater? Rain falls on the land and moves across it into streams, rivers and the ocean. As we develop and change the landscape, hard surfaces intercept the rain and prevent it from soaking into the soil. It now becomes stormwater.

What is polluted stormwater? Polluted stormwater occurs as storm runoff picks up debris, dirt, oils, pesticides, fertilizers, paint, solvents, pet waste, and other pollutants.

What is a storm drain? A storm drain is an opening at the curb, in the street, or in a yard that collects storm runoff and carries it via underground pipes to a stormwater pond, ditch, or stream.

What is the difference between a storm drain and a sanitary sewer drain? A storm drain discharges **untreated** stormwater into our waterways or to a best management practice. A sanitary sewer drain carries household and commercial wastewater to a treatment plant so that it is cleaned before it is discharged into our waterways.

What is a stormwater pond? Stormwater ponds are common features in neighborhoods and commercial developments. They are often viewed as neighborhood amenities, but are in fact engineered structures designed to capture stormwater as it runs across the land so that it does not cause flooding. Stormwater ponds retain water during a storm and release it slowly so that it reduces impacts on downstream waters and properties.

What are impaired waters? Required by the Clean Water Act, impaired waters are too polluted or degraded to meet the water quality standards set by states, territories, or authorized tribes. The law requires that these jurisdictions establish priority rankings for waters on the lists and develop TMDLs for these waters. A Total Maximum Daily Load, or TMDL, is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still safely meet water quality standards.

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