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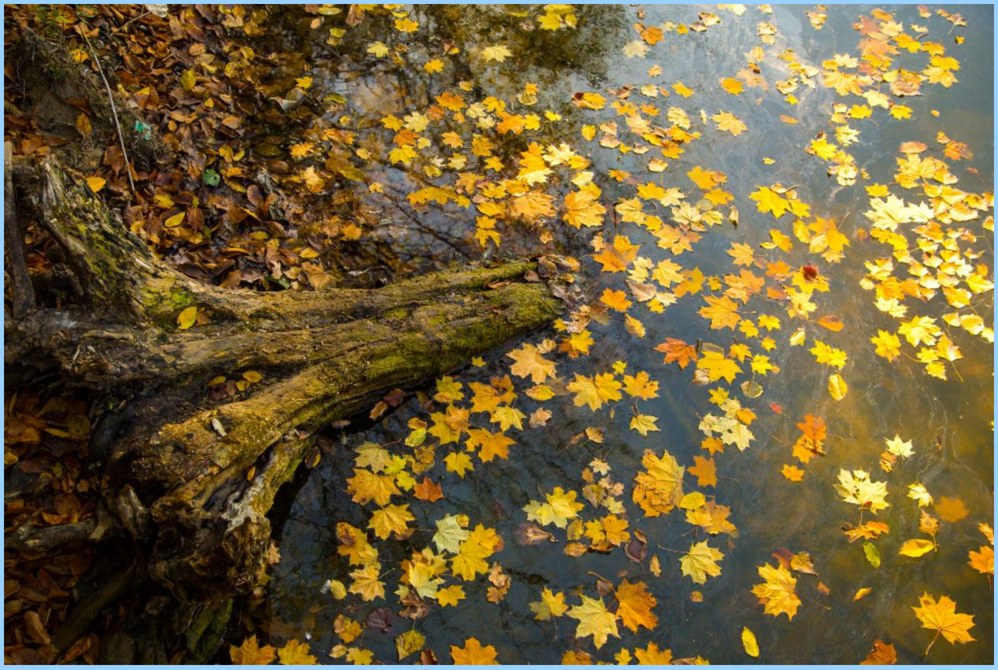
Hamilton County Storm Water District E-Newsletter
Fall 2024 Edition

Quarterly News & Updates from your Partners at the Hamilton County Storm Water District



Storm Water District Dive:
MCM0 - Stormwater Program Operation & Administration

Get to know your Stormwater District! This section will highlight services provided by *the Hamilton County Stormwater District. Each quarter, we'll feature Minimum Control Measures (MCMs), review FAQs, or highlight TMDLs.*

This quarter we're reviewing MCM0 - Stormwater Program Operation/Administration.

The purpose of MCM0 is to provide administrative and operational services complying with Ohio EPA's General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4), also known as the MS4 Permit. The primary responsibility of the District is to provide the services necessary to assist the County and its Co-Permittees in complying with the MS4 Permit.

District-produced reports (pictured), official guidance documents, and regulations are available on the District website.

The District has dedicated funding from a special assessment based on the stormwater generated by each property within the Storm Water District jurisdictions. District services are administrated by the Hamilton County Engineers Office (HCEO) and are implemented by Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH), Hamilton County Planning & Development (HP+D), and Hamilton County Conservation District (HCCD), in cooperation with other partners—both government and private organizations.

HCSWD MCM0 Fact Sheet

Visit the HCSWD Website

District and Co-Permittee Permit Compliance Activities include:

- Program and Policy Development
- Activity Tracking, Reporting, and Record Keeping
- Financial Management
- Coordination

Check out the MCM0 Fact Sheet linked above, and browse the website for even more information.

News & Highlights

Storm Drain Labeling

Storm drain labels are small but significant tools used to raise public awareness about the connection between storm drains and local water bodies. Typically, these labels are placed on or near storm drains with messages like "No Dumping – Drains to River" or "Only Rain in the Drain." They serve as visual reminders that what enters the storm drains goes directly into nearby rivers, lakes, or streams without treatment.

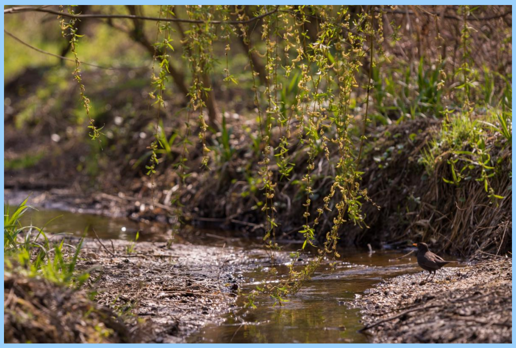
By labeling storm drains, communities can help prevent pollution by reminding residents to dispose of hazardous materials properly. They also play a key role in environmental education, encouraging responsible behavior, and fostering a sense of shared responsibility for clean water. Whether it's preventing litter or ensuring that fertilizers and pesticides are used sparingly, storm drain labels are a simple yet effective way to protect our waterways.

Storm Drain Labeling events are great for community groups, scouts, and other groups looking for fun community service projects! The Hamilton County Conservation District is looking to host storm drain labeling events with communities in the following watersheds in 2025:

- Great Miami River
- Muddy Creek
- Taylor Creek
- Whitewater River
- Rapid Run
- Mill Creek

For more information about scheduling a Storm Drain Labeling event in your community, contact Sarah Meadows at: sarah.meadows@hamilton-co.org, (513)946-8032.

The Role of Drought in Aquatic Systems



Droughts significantly reduce surface and subsurface water in streams and rivers, causing stream drying that affects aquatic ecosystems by reducing fish, invertebrate, and algae populations, shifting food webs, and impairing ecosystem function. In one study (*The influence of drought on flow-ecology relationships in Ozark Highland streams* by D. Lynch, D. Leasure, and D. Magoulick) researchers use field studies, lab experiments, and modeling to understand how drought impacts these ecosystems in Ozark streams. The team found that drought destabilized fish populations, with lower fish assemblage stability, and had larger fluctuations in fish density in areas that suffered intense droughts consecutively. In other studies (*Refuge habitats for fishes during seasonal drying in an intermittent stream: movement, survival and abundance of three minnow species* by S. Hodges and D. Magoulick), researchers examined what habitats act as refuges for fish and crayfish during seasonal drought and found that refuge habitats were species and size class dependent, with some fish species using pools as refuges and some crayfish species using the subsurface wetted area as refuges.

This research is useful for addressing water use issues, such as those stemming from drought, agricultural uses, and aquatic ecosystem conservation. Advanced techniques, like machine learning, help identify critical thresholds for species survival, supporting sustainable water management and conservation efforts.

For more information, see the source linked below:

Wildlife Management Insitute

Hamilton County Conservation District has Moved

HAMILTON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ADVANCING SOIL AND WATER SUSTAINABILITY

Stormwater Best Practices

"Skimmer" Review

(Construction Sediment Settling Basin Surface Outlets)

A skimmer is a floating device designed to withdraw water from the surface of a sediment settling basin. During construction, there is no plant material to stabilize soil, making it susceptible to erosion. A sediment settling basin allows the soil particles to settle on the bottom of the basin, while the skimmer drains off the top layer of water in the basin, leaving the sediment behind and out of our waterways.

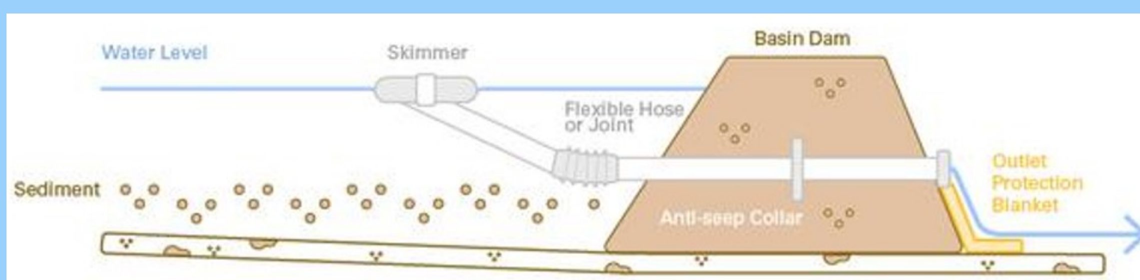


Diagram of a properly installed skimmer in a sediment settling basin.

Are skimmers required? This is part of MCM4 to maintain permit compliance, and is outlined in part II.F of the Ohio Construction General Permit: a sediment basin must withdraw water from the surface where feasible. For most major construction operations (i.e. grubbing, excavating, grading, utilities infrastructure installation, & others), this is included in the SWPPP (storm water pollution prevention plan) checklist and will be checked during plan review before construction permit approval. Check your permit if you are unsure if you need a skimmer.

Skimmer installed in correct orifice, flex connector, rope attached for easy maintenance. Snorkel has color code for orifice size range.

Here are some installation tips to ensure skimmers effectiveness:

Proper Sizing: Not all skimmers are the same - *they are not one size fits all*.

- To ensure you purchase and install the correct skimmer, you can use Ohio EPA's sediment basin compliance worksheet. This will guide you through calculating proper skimmer size.
- Skimmer manufacturer websites also often have sizing tools available to use.

Proper Installation: There are several points during installation with room for error, a skimmer that is not correctly installed may not function and will need to be fixed/retrofitted, so it is best to get it right the first time!

- Install in the correct orifice in the outlet structure
- Verify correct orifice size on the design plan
- Use flex-fitting, ridged pipe to attach
- Include a stone pad or equivalent in a dry basin
- Have a rope attached for easy maintenance
- Install the skimmer attachment right-side up

Correctly installed skimmer on an existing basin retrofit using a standpipe.

For more information about skimmer requirements, sizing, and installation, review this presentation or contact the Hamilton County Conservation District Earthwork Department at 513-946-8020.

Upcoming Events

2025 Rain Barrel Art Project - Artist Submission

October 2 - December 14

All artists, including students and seasoned professionals, are invited to apply to be a part of the 13th annual Rain Barrel Art Project. The Rain Barrel Art Project is an initiative designed to educate the community about water conservation and pollution caused by stormwater runoff. This initiative is a joint effort of SaveLocalWaters and the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden.

Rain Barrel Art Project Webpage

Hamilton County ReSource's Household Hazardous Products (HHP)

October 18-19

Hamilton County ReSource’s 2024 HHP disposal event will be on October 18 and 19 in Colerain Township. Exact location will be provided after registration. **Registration is required**

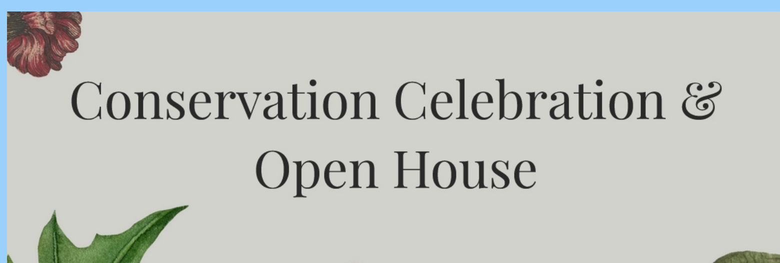
Household Hazardous Products 2024

Drop-Off Event

Register Here

Hamilton County Conservation District's Conservation Celebration and Open House

October 28
4:00 - 6:30 pm



Please join the Hamilton County Conservation District for a family-friendly conservation celebration. Between 4:00pm - 6:30pm drop in and enjoy appetizers, vote in the board of supervisors election, tour the new space, meet our new mascot, and visit the Wave on Wheels. The awards presentation will begin at 5:30pm.

Register Here

Storm Water District Partner's Contact Information

Hamilton County Planning+ Development

HAMILTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

HAMILTON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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