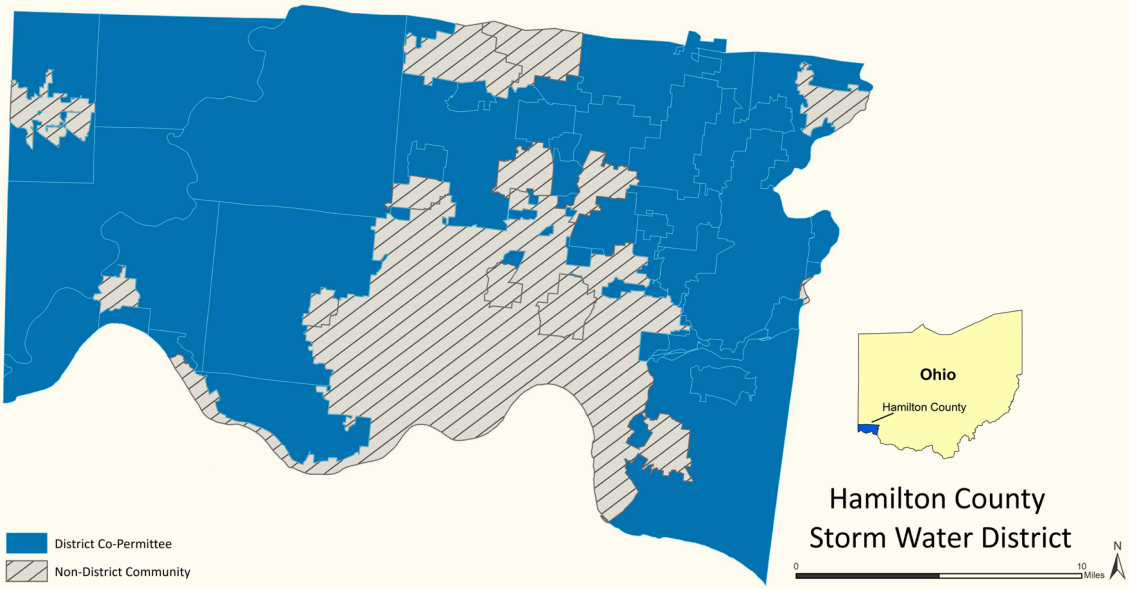
HAMILTON COUNTY
Storm Water District

HCSWD

What is the Hamilton County Storm Water District?

Hamilton County Storm Water District (HCSWD/District) was established by the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners in response to the federally mandated phase II stormwater program. This program required more than 480 local governments across Ohio to apply for a stormwater permit by March 10, 2003. The District provides the services necessary to assist the County and its Co-Permittees in complying with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit. The District serves the County, all 12 townships, and 24 of the 36 municipal corporations within Hamilton County that have elected to become District Co-Permittees.



What is the Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) General Permit?

The MS4 General Permit originates from the Clean Water Act of 1972 and the 1987 amendments to this act (Water Quality Act). This act mandated by U.S. EPA adopts regulations requiring National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) permits for stormwater dischargers. This discharge can be runoff from land and impervious areas such as paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops during rainfall and snow events, but also stormwater that flows into, through, and eventually out of storm sewers. In 1992, U.S. EPA gave authority to Ohio EPA to issue general NPDES permits and by 1993, regulations were changed to include stormwater discharges with minor impacts on the receiving stream. These requirements are outlined in Ohio EPA's MS4 permit, which helps to protect both public health and the aquatic environment. The latest MS4 permit (OHQ000004) was issued on April 1, 2021 and is valid until March 31, 2026. The MS4 Permit establishes performance standards for six minimum control measures (MCMs) to reduce discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable and requires permittees to implement a stormwater management program (SWMP) to achieve these standards.

Who Runs the District?

The District operates through a group of existing County agencies (i.e., Partner Agencies), to maximize "economies of scale", meaning rather than creating a whole new organization, staff at the existing agencies can perform their agency directed work but also work on behalf of the District. Partner Agency roles are defined to leverage specialized capabilities and/or legal authorities in specific areas. The Hamilton County Engineer serves as the District's administrator, while Hamilton County Conservation District, Hamilton County Public Health, and Hamilton County Planning and Development serve as Partner Agencies, working together to perform permit compliance activities. District policy and decision making is guided by an Oversight Board, which meets four times per year. These meetings are open to the public.

Why Does Stormwater Matter?

Stormwater is runoff, snow melt runoff, and surface runoff and drainage. The runoff and drainage caused by precipitation, in any form, that flows over surfaces is considered stormwater. Stormwater runoff is typically recognized as the largest pollutant to waterways in the United States, both rural and urban. Hamilton County's landscape is greatly impacted by stormwater runoff. Water quality is a top environmental concern for Americans. Since the passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972, point-source pollution (i.e. pollution with a single identifiable source) from industrial areas and sewage treatment plants has been greatly reduced. Today, increasing water quality problems are from non-point sources of pollution (pollution without a single identifiable source such as excess fertilizer/ herbicide use, urban runoff, or eroding streambanks) including stormwater discharges. Polluted stormwater can lead to fish kills, destruction of wildlife habitat, loss of aesthetic value, impaired recreational areas, and contaminated drinking water resources. The actions we take as individual citizens contribute to the health of the streams, rivers, and ponds across our County's landscape.

Contact Us!

Hamilton County Engineer's Office (HCEO)

Programmatic and Policy-Related Program Inquiries:

Program Administrator Todd Long, Deputy Chief Engineer
todd.long@hamilton-co.org
(513) 946-4254

Hamilton County Conservation District (HCCD)

MCM 1-Public Education and Outreach, MCM2-Public Involvement and Participation, and MCM4-Construction Site Runoff Control Program Inquiries:

Sara Fehring, Executive Director
sara.fehring@hamilton-co.org
(513) 772-7645

Hamilton County Planning + Development (HCPD)

District Mapping and MCM5-Post Construction Control Program Inquiries:

Mohammad Islam, Director
Mohammad.Islam@hamilton-co.org
(513) 946-4757

Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH)

MCM3-Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination, Home Sewage Treatment Systems, MCM6-Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping, Facility Training, or Facilty Storm Water Plans:

Ryan Wuest, Supervisor, Division of Water Quality
ryan.wuest@hamilton-co.org
(513) 946-7941

Benefits of the District

A proactive District capitalizes on its many resources to simplify permit compliance! The District:

- Provides services to each Co-Permittee member to meet comply with performance standards for regulatory requirements under minimum control measures (MCMs) established by the MS4 permit at the national and state level
- Prepares and updates guidelines, protocols, procedures, plans, regulatory language, and other documents necessary to establish and maintain minimum compliance
- Represents the collective interests of all jurisdictions to regulatory agencies and the public
- Promotes pollution prevention through educational activities and events for people of all ages and interests to reduce reliance on more costly structural controls
- Minimizes individual jurisdiction costs through creation of a dedicated funding source
- Takes advantage of economies of scale by building on existing County programs and staff

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www.hcswd.org