

## Answers

### 1. Do you live in a watershed?

Yes! Every one of us lives in a watershed. A watershed is just an area of land which drains into a common water body.

Watersheds can be in cities, out in the country, or in your neighborhood. Check out the map on the back page to find your watershed address.

Our daily activities can affect the quality of our streams because rain water carries pollutants into the streams. These pollutants can be excess fertilizers from our gardens, oil that has dripped from our cars in the driveway, or dirt that has washed off from bare patches in our yards.

### 2. Where does rain water go when it leaves your property?

Rain water, also called stormwater, flows across our properties and down storm drains, eventually winding up in nearby streams.

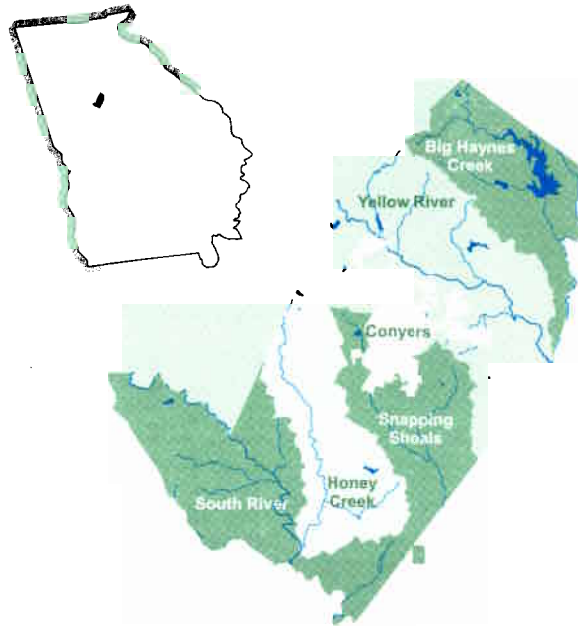
### 3. Can residents do anything to improve Rockdale County's water resources?

Yes! Not only can residents improve our water resources but we need residents to pitch in and help. Everyone needs to be part of water quality protection: citizens, schools, businesses, local and state governments, and elected officials. For specific activities that you can do at home, open this pamphlet and paste the "News You Can Use" on your refrigerator.

### 4. What is the county doing to protect our water resources?

Glad you asked. Because Rockdale County is rapidly growing, we need to make sure that as we grow we continue to protect our water resources. Look inside for what we are doing and how you can help!

## Find your watershed address!



### More questions?

Call us today to find out how you can help protect Rockdale County's water resources.

Contact:

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Watershed Management Liaison  
Rockdale Water Resources  
1329-F Portman Drive  
Conyers, GA 30013  
(770) 918-6799  
FAX: (770) 918-6529  
kim.zimmerman@rockdalecounty.org

For soil and erosion concerns contact:

Rusty Hazelton  
Environmental Compliance Officer  
Public Services and Engineering  
2570 Old Covington Highway  
Conyers, GA 30012  
(770) 785-5919

Board of Commissioners  
Norman Wheeler, Chairman  
Bud Sosebee  
Barbara Nunn McCarthy



Take this quiz  
to test your  
watershed smarts...

1. Do you live in a watershed?
2. Where does rain water go when it leaves your property?
3. Can residents do anything to improve Rockdale County's water resources?
4. What is the county doing to protect our water resources?

Check inside  
for the answers  
and find out  
how you can  
help protect  
Rockdale  
County's  
resources!



Watershed Management Plan

# Rockdale County Watershed Management Plan

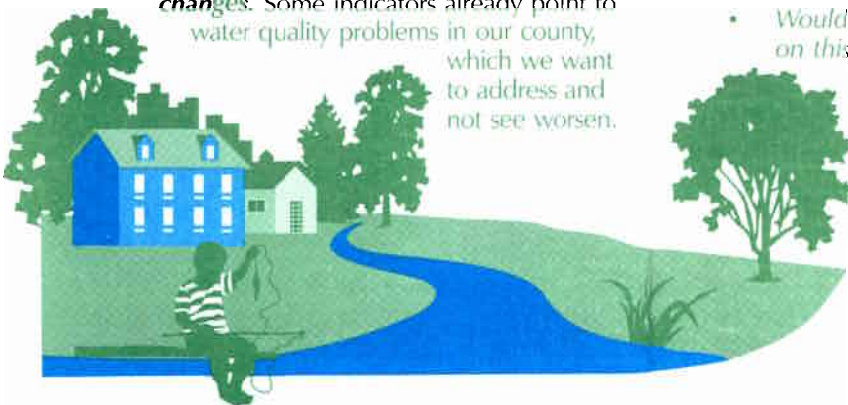
## How do we balance growth while protecting our water resources?

The county's rapid growth is creating several challenges. These challenges include the need to provide adequate supplies of drinking water and wastewater treatment capacity, while maintaining the water quality of our streams and minimizing flooding problems. To balance these objectives and guide growth in an environmentally-sensitive manner, Rockdale County is developing a watershed management plan.

This watershed management plan will provide a planning framework for the county to make the most supportable, cost-effective decisions on management practices that will restore and protect water quality and minimize flooding potential.

## What are the critical issues for Rockdale County?

- **Localized flooding due to stormwater runoff from land-use changes.** Flooding damages property, destroys habitat for birds and wildlife, and can even be a health hazard.
- **Need for permits from the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) for water supply withdrawal and expanded wastewater discharge.** Without these permits, the county will not be able to accommodate planned growth.
- **Threats to water quality from increased pollution due to stormwater runoff from land-use changes.** Some indicators already point to water quality problems in our county, which we want to address and not see worsen.



## What are the goals of the watershed assessment plan?

- Maintain the environmental goals set for our streams and lakes by EPD.
- Reduce the potential for flooding as development occurs.
- Provide for a safe, adequate water supply.
- Support wastewater, water withdrawal, and stormwater permitting decisions.
- Increase awareness about water quality problems and solutions to protect water quality.
- Strengthen the linkage between land use activities and water quality and flooding.

## How can I get involved?

There are several opportunities to help support the development and implementation of the watershed management plan.

- *Do you want to provide input on the issues for the plan and help identify the possible solutions?*
- *Are you interested in stenciling storm drains to alert residents about not dumping anything down them?*
- *Would your company like to participate in upcoming watershed events?*
- *Would you like us to make a presentation on this project to your organization?*

If you answered yes to any of the above questions call us today at (770) 918-6799.

## News You Can Use

Follow these tips at home to reduce pollution, and keep our waters clean and safe. Post it on the fridge so everyone in your house can use these tips.

1. **Use fertilizers wisely.** Overfertilizing your lawn and garden can do more harm than good. Your plants can only absorb so much, so excess fertilizer is washed into our streams, causing the fish to suffocate.
  - Have your soil tested to determine how much fertilizer you need. Leave grass clippings on your lawn to put nitrogen back into the soil.
  - Don't fertilize when rain is expected.
  - Call Rockdale County Extension Services at (770) 785-5952 for information on how to take a soil sample.
2. **Cover up those bare patches.** When rain falls on bare soil, the dirt is washed into streams, clouding the water and making it hard for fish to breathe.
  - Mulch over bare patches to conserve moisture.
  - Plant tall grasses on slopes.
3. **Build or preserve a natural screen by your stream.** Plants and trees are very effective at trapping pollutants before they reach the stream. These screens, or buffers, also help to anchor stream banks, prevent erosion, and create shade.
  - As a rule, don't mow within 20 feet of a stream to allow the grasses and shrubs to take hold.
  - If planting a natural screen, remember to use native plants. Call Rockdale County Extension Services for a list of native plants.
4. **Get involved!** Chances are there is a watershed organization in your community.
  - Join it and help monitor the quality of our waters, pick up trash, plant trees, and spread the word on the importance of taking care of our watersheds.
5. **Dispose of household chemicals properly.** Call the Rockdale County Recycling Station at (770) 785-6883 to find out what materials are acceptable.