

# Keeping **Current**

An update on Wisconsin's land and water natural resources programs and issues



February 1999

## Kids and spray paint...

Sounds like a bad idea, but it doesn't necessarily spell trouble, especially if it's part of a storm drain stenciling project. Volunteers in more than 100 Wisconsin communities have participated in programs to stencil "Dump no Waste, Drains to Lake (or Stream)" on more than 6,000 storm drain inlets.



The Water Action Volunteers (WAV), sponsored by UW-Extension and DNR, has released summary results of a 1998 Madison survey conducted to determine whether stenciled messages influenced people's understanding of storm water issues. The survey looked at two neighborhoods; one had been stenciled and one had not.

"Stenciling activities do seem to increase recognition of one particular fact," notes WAV Coordinator Pam

Packer. "People have an increased awareness that storm drains discharge to nearby waterways." Of the people who had seen the message, 71 percent said they knew that storm drains lead directly to a waterway, while only 40 percent of those who had not seen the message knew that fact.

Interestingly, survey results show that the message on the curb raised awareness

of storm drains in a broader area than just the intended neighborhood. All respondents had difficulty remembering the specific location of the stenciled message, although most reported that they had seen it near their home. In fact, 67 percent of residents in the unstenciled neighborhood reported seeing the message near their homes, despite the absence of stenciled messages in their area.

While stenciling raises people's awareness, does it contribute to behavior changes?

"The survey results aren't clear on that point," says Packer, "but the message can enhance other storm water education programs and reinforce people already using environmentally friendly practices.

"The volunteer groups also benefit from annual stenciling campaigns," notes Packer, "and gain a sense of community involvement while contributing to environmental protection."

For copies of the survey summary or more information about the survey, storm drain stenciling projects and other WAV programs, contact Pam Packer (ppacker@facstaff.wisc.edu, 608/264-8949) or visit WAV on the web:

<http://clean-water.uwex.edu/wav>

### Conservation on the land internships

College student interns help NRCS and LCD staff with CRP projects, nutrient management plans, wildlife plantings and other field work. Interns receive college credit and/or tuition scholarships for their summer work. A handbook with complete information about timelines, position descriptions and hiring procedures for Summer 2000 will be available in March. For more information contact Pat Murphy, NRCS, 608/276-8732 ext 258, or Kevin Erb, UWEX, 920/391-4610.

### Conservation standards available online

The Wisconsin Standards Oversight Council has recently revised a number of standards, including pond sealing or lining, wetland restoration, well decommissioning, manure transfer, and heavy use area protection. All NRCS technical standards and drawings are now available from the Wisconsin NRCS website:



[www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov/tech.html](http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov/tech.html)

### Advice for shoreland property owners

Wisconsin law places certain restrictions on changes to shoreland areas. Counties adopt these standards and sometimes pass more restrictive standards. Landowners can learn about their county's shoreland zoning laws at:

[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/dsfm/shore/county2.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/dsfm/shore/county2.htm)

In April, DNR will have a publication with specific information about all county shoreland zoning ordinances. For more information contact Carmen Wagner, 608/266-0061



## NONPOINT HEARINGS

DNR informational meetings at 12:00 and 5:30 p.m., hearings at 1:30 and 7:00 p.m. at:

**March 13**  
Ullsvik Center  
UW-Platteville

**March 14**  
Western Wis. Tech. School  
La Crosse

**March 15**  
Fitchburg Community Center  
Fitchburg

**March 16**  
Public Library  
(32 Sheboygan Street)  
Fond du Lac

**March 20**  
Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary  
Green Bay

**March 21**  
Holiday Inn  
Rhinelander

**March 21**  
Badgerland Civic Center  
Spooner

**March 22**  
1015 Reserve Street  
UW-Stevens Point

**March 22**  
Northern Great Lakes  
Visitor Center  
Ashland

**March 27**  
River Falls High School  
River Falls

**March 28**  
Waukesha VFW  
Waukesha

DATCP informational meetings at 12:30, testimony 2:00-5:30:

**March 14**  
Fitchburg Community Center  
Fitchburg

**March 15**  
Michael Fields Ag Institute  
East Troy

**March 16**  
Melville Hall (formerly the Administration Building)  
UW-Richland Center

**March 21**  
Whitehall City Center  
Whitehall

**March 22**  
Calumet County Courthouse  
Chilton

**March 23**  
Hancock Ag Research Station  
Hancock

**March 28**  
Agricultural Center  
Medford

**March 29**  
Langlade County Fairgrounds  
Multipurpose Bldg.  
Antigo

**March 30**  
Barron County Courthouse  
Barron

**April 5**  
Videoconference,  
7:30-9:30 p.m.  
Pyle Center, UW-Madison;  
DNR Headquarters,  
Rhinelander; Rothwell  
Student Center, UW-Superior

## New proposals for nonpoint: a quick look

In late January, the DNR and DATCP boards voted to approve public hearings on new rules addressing nonpoint source pollution. The proposed rules signal a significant shift in Wisconsin's approach to controlling polluted runoff in urban and agricultural areas.

The cornerstone of the rules are proposed state-wide performance standards for both urban and rural areas (including manure management prohibitions). The performance standards will address soil erosion from croplands, streambanks and shorelines, manure runoff from barnyards and feedlots, sediment from construction sites, and polluted stormwater runoff from transportation facilities and developed urban areas. DNR will develop rules for the performance standards and prohibitions, and DATCP will develop rules to implement agricultural standards.

Implementation and enforcement will occur through local municipal or county ordinances with DNR having backup authority. County Land and Water Resource Management Plans will identify strategies to implement performance standards. Counties with demonstrated enforcement capability will receive priority for state cost-sharing.

The agricultural performance standards and prohibitions are enforceable only if cost-sharing is provided. Most municipalities and other non-agricultural operators would be held to the standards

regardless of whether there was state money to help them cover some of the cost of controlling the runoff. However, municipalities under 2,500 population would be required to meet the standards only if the state helped share the cost.

The proposed rules change the funding mechanism for local nonpoint efforts by creating a base level of funding for both program administration and installation of rural conservation practices and targeted funding to both rural and urban areas. The targeted funds would be used primarily for conservation practices. In addition, a clearinghouse would be established to match funding sources from participating agencies with specific projects to maximize funding of local and state priorities.

Both DATCP and DNR have scheduled public hearings and informational meetings regarding the proposed rule changes (see schedule at left).

For a copy of the DATCP rule (ATCP 50) and more information, call 608/224-4620. Deadline for comments is April 19.

The deadline for comments on DNR's rules is May 5. Send written comments or requests for information to Carol Holden, DNR, WT/2, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707, phone (608) 266-0140, FAX: (608) 267-2800 (e-mail: holdce@dnr.state.wi.us). For a copy of proposed DNR rules see:

[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wmi/announce.html](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wmi/announce.html)

### On the table:

## Comprehensive nutrient management planning

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service is developing technical guidance materials for nutrient management that take a step beyond traditional nutrient management plans. The traditional plans focus primarily on managing the amount and timing of nutrient applications.

Comprehensive nutrient management plans (CNMPs) would incorporate: animal outputs (manure/wastewater collection, handling, storage, treatment, transfer); evaluation of land application sites; land application; records of CNMP implementation; inputs to animals; and other waste utilization activities or options.

The technical guidance document would not establish regulatory requirements for government programs, but would be used by NRCS staff, local field staff, consultants and landowners in developing CNMPs.



NRCS is also developing tools that will help build capacity for CNMP development, including software for nutrient management planning and animal waste

management, training in development of CNMPs, guidance for state certification programs, and sample CNMPs animal types and regions.

For more information contact Obie Ashford (301/504-2197, obie.ashford@usda.gov). The federal register version of the draft guidance document is available at:

<http://www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/PROGRAMS/ahcwpd/ahCNMP.html>

Some new publications... and some older ones you might have missed

In the past we've used *Keeping Current* as a way to publicize new publications and other materials of interest to folks working in Wisconsin's land and water resources education programs. But since we haven't published *Keeping Current* in some months, you might not be aware of some newer materials.

### Shoreland Restoration series

Developed by the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership and Basin Education Programs, this series focuses on an issue of increasing concern - maintaining and restoring natural shorelands in the face of increasing development pressure. Two fact sheets targeted to landowners are now available, and more are planned. The fact sheets can also be viewed and printed at:

<http://clean-water.uwex.edu/pubs/shore/>

### What is a Shoreland Buffer? (GWQ028)

This two-page fact sheet describes natural buffers, and summarizes the state's legal requirements that apply to shoreland development under Wisconsin's Shoreland Management Program. The fact sheet also identifies additional sources of information.

### A Fresh Look at Shoreland Restoration (GWQ027)

Building a home and establishing a traditional lawn along a shoreline can cause seven times the amount of phosphorus and 18 times the amount of sediment to enter the water compared to a natural shoreline. This four-page fact sheet provides an overview of how shore-land property owners can transform their lawn into a naturally landscaped yard that provides a variety of environmental benefits. The fact sheet also identifies additional sources of information.

### "Choices" fact sheet series for Wisconsin's farmers

Developed cooperatively by UW-Extension and the Natural Resources Conservation Service-Wisconsin, these fact sheets help farmers look at their operation with an eye toward environmental quality, point out common management issues, and introduce practical management solutions.

### Manure Management Choices (GWQ024)

This 16-page color fact sheet describes various dairy and beef operations and manure management issues with each system, and describes options for manure application, storage, animal lot runoff control, and streambank and shoreline protection.

### Farmland Conservation Choices (GWQ025)

This 32-page color fact sheet features 26 common conservation practices, describes how each practice works



### Residue Management Choices (GWQ029)

This 16-page color fact sheet describes tillage and planting operations commonly used in Wisconsin, estimates the amount of residue left by each system, and describes how to measure residue and how to get started with increased residue management.

Available in late-March, 2000



developing a farm conservation plan.

Extension publications with a

"GWQ" number are free to Wisconsin individuals, government offices, and not-for-profit educational organizations. For copies, call your county Extension office, or call Cooperative Extension Publications,

608/262-3346.

### Urban yard care and stormwater fact sheets

The UW-Extension Environmental Resources Center has recently revised seven fact sheets

from the Yard Care and

the Environment series

and four fact sheets

from the urban

stormwater series

featuring the

"Stormie" character

The fact sheets

were originally devel-

oped in support of the

Wisconsin Priority

Watersheds Program.

These revised fact

sheets are still avail-

able free from Coop-

erative Extension Publications,

and can also be viewed and printed at:

<http://clean-water.uwex.edu>

### The Wisconsin Storm Water Manual (G3691)

The manual, developed by DNR and UW-Extension, is a technical guide to the selection, design, construction and maintenance of storm water Best Management Practices. The manual includes an overview of storm water management principles, and seven technical fact sheets covering hydrology and screening criteria for selecting practices, as well as engineering guide-lines for five practices (wet detention basins, infiltration basins and trenches, artificial wetlands, grassed swales, and filter strips).

This publication is available from Cooperative Extension Publications for \$15.

