



Public Awareness Strategy

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Background Information

The City of Fayetteville, along with Cumberland County, was issued a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Stormwater Discharge Permit in 1994. This permit, which is administered by the State of North Carolina on behalf of EPA, required the City and the County to jointly comply with the NPDES stormwater regulations. In 2009, Cumberland County was no longer required by the State to meet Phase I regulations and was allowed by NC DENR to withdraw from the program. The City of Fayetteville continued to implement the provisions of that initial permit up until the new permit was issued to the City on March 1, 2013. This permit expired on February 28, 2018. The City received a renewed permit on October 10, 2018.

One of the heavily weighted requirements of the permit is for the municipality to have a public education component. Public awareness activities have been designed to educate the public and help them recognize their responsibilities in reducing stormwater runoff pollution, maintaining the environment, and promoting the general quality of life. It has always been the belief of the City of Fayetteville Stormwater Program that it is much easier and less expensive to educate the public not to contribute to stormwater pollution than it is to remove the pollutant once it has reached the Waters of the State. According to the permit, the Stormwater Program must meet certain objectives while conducting the public education portion of our program. These objectives are: distribute educational materials to the community, conduct public outreach activities, raise public awareness on the causes and impacts of stormwater pollution, and inform the public on steps they can take to reduce or prevent stormwater pollution. This document serves to outline how the City will execute the Public Awareness and Public Involvement provisions of the Permit.

Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of the public education component of the Stormwater Program is to increase public awareness of stormwater pollution and to improve water quality to our local rivers and streams. In reaching this overall goal, the Stormwater Program has identified the following objectives:

1. Increase public knowledge of what stormwater is, and how the public can help protect water quality.
2. Increase public knowledge of flooding to protect health, lives, public safety and property.
3. Increase public knowledge of the services of the Stormwater Program, and how those services benefit the community.
4. Collaboration of Stormwater Program Staff and Engineering staff to provide citizens with excellent customer service, and to promote the Stormwater Message.

These objectives were identified by activities done in the past, work orders that have been recorded, permit requirements, and the Stormwater Ordinance that has been adopted by the City.

Target Pollutants/Stressors

Through ambient in-stream water monitoring, it has been determined that pollutants of concern for the streams within the City of Fayetteville include: Nutrients (as indicated by levels of Nitrogen and NO₂+NO₃) and Fecal Coliform. Portions of Blounts Creek, Cross Creek, Rockfish Creek, Locks Creek, Little Cross Creek, and Country Club Branch are impaired and are on the NC 303(d) list. These creeks run through heavily urbanized areas within the City of Fayetteville.

Along with the reported pollutants above, the City also strives to educate the public on erosion, illicit dumping, littering, and other sources of pollution caused by urbanization. The Stormwater Program takes active measures to advertise and educate the public about "When it Rains, it Drains".

Target Audiences

It is the belief of the Stormwater Program that by educating children, they will reach the parents. The stormwater educator continually conducts several programs in the schools each year; targeting school aged children and their teachers. The educator aligns programs with the NC Essential Science Standards, so that the information presented is pertinent to what the students are learning in the classroom.

The Stormwater Program also offers several video training programs aimed at educating businesses about stormwater pollution prevention. Some of the types of businesses that are being targeted are: concrete companies, landscaping and lawn maintenance services, painting companies, restaurants, and governmental entities that pose a threat to stormwater pollution through activities related to tasks performed.

The Stormwater Program also strives to provide information to other ethnic groups including the growing Hispanic population within the community by offering Spanish translations of its popular publications, and through other advertising means, in order to reach all citizens effectively.

It is the plan of the Stormwater Program to formally survey its citizens approximately every two years to determine a baseline level of knowledge, and to further define our target audience from that point. As our target audiences are further defined, the goals and objectives will be updated to address those changes. By doing these surveys, the Stormwater Division also hopes to measure growth of knowledge of stormwater pollution prevention.

Communication Strategies

Objective 1.

Increase public knowledge of what stormwater is, and how the public can help protect water quality, through distribution of educational materials to identified user groups.

Concepts, Audiences, Tools

Concepts

- All storm drains flow directly to creeks and lakes without treatment to remove pollutants.
- Only stormwater in storm drains, do not pour anything down a storm drain or into a creek, stream, or river.
- Anything mixed with rain becomes stormwater pollution. "Only Rain in the Storm Drain".
- Targeted pollutant sources: Human waste, animal waste, sediment, fertilizer, pesticides, yard wastes, car washing waste water, automobile fluids, household hazardous waste, etc.
- The department maintains a hotline that citizens can utilize to report pollution

Audiences

- Adults
- Homeowners
- Dog Owners
- Parents
- Civic Groups
- Businesses
- Municipal Agencies
- Students
- Home car washers
- Home mechanics

- Landscapers
- Home Maintenance (painters, carpet cleaners, etc.)
- Hispanic Community
- Developers

Tools

- Media Campaigns
- Social Media Outlets
- Utility Bill Inserts (PWC)
- Website
- Direct Mailings
- Brochures, informational booklets, fact sheets
- Promotional items
- Public Meetings
- Group presentations, including schools
- Public Events/Displays
- Volunteer Program
- News Releases
- City Media Outlets (Fayetteville Observer, Fayetteville Focus, etc.)
- Partnerships with other agencies
- Targeted Outreach to professionals
- Public Service Announcements
- Stormee Information/Visits
- Annual Report
- Public Signage

Objective 2

Increase public knowledge of flooding to protect lives and property

Concepts, Audiences, Tools

Concepts

- What are the causes of flooding?
- What individuals can do about flooding.
- What City Engineering is doing about flooding.
- Flooding can and does happen outside of mapped flood plains.
- Don't drive in flood water.
- Don't walk or play in flowing water.
- Make sure storm drains are clear of debris.
- Awareness of floodplain maps and map updates.
- Know if property you own is in a designated floodplain.
- Understand basic functions of floodplains
- Maintain a hotline for citizens to use to report flooding issues

Audiences:

- Residents
- Property owners
- Property owners in designated flood plains
- Renters/Tenants
- Drivers
- Parents/Adults
- Realtors
- Builders/Contractors
- Surveyors
- Insurance agents
- News media
- Engineers

Tools:

- Media Campaign
- Website
- Social Media Outlets
- Brochures/information sheets
- Promotional items
- Public events/displays
- Public meetings/workshops
- News releases
- City Media Outlets (Fayetteville Observer, Up and Coming, etc.)
- Targeted outreach to professionals
- Public Service Announcements
- Partnerships with other agencies
- Partnerships with businesses

Objective 3

Increase public knowledge of the services of the Stormwater Division, and how those services benefit the community.

Concepts, Audiences, Tools**Concepts**

- Your “Stormwater Dollars at Work” signs and updates of projects/services on website.
- Even without a need for maintenance work, you benefit from paying a stormwater fee.
- Dozens of services are provided by Stormwater Services.
- Understanding of the storm drainage system.
- Understanding/acceptance of fees.
- Understanding of process used to resolve citizen calls and questions.
- Establish identity readily understood by citizens

Audiences

- Adults (In city limits)
- Fee payers
- Students
- Businesses
- Property owners within project limits

Tools:

- Media Campaigns
- Social Media Outlets
- Website
- Direct mailings/project communications
- News releases
- Brochures, informational booklets, and fact sheets
- Promotional items
- Public meetings, including public hearings on rate increases as required by law
- Group presentations
- Public events/displays
- Annual Reports
- City Media Outlets (Fayetteville Observer, Up and Coming, etc.)
- Special media campaigns such as those related to new or amended ordinances
- Spanish-language information
- Statistics about our services
- Hotline

Objective 4

Collaboration of Stormwater Division Staff and Engineering staff to provide citizens with excellent customer service, and to promote Stormwater Message.

Concepts, Audiences, Tools

Concepts

- Provide training to increase knowledge and awareness to all staff.
- Shared sense of purpose for all involved with stormwater services.
- Practice excellent customer service.
- Provide stormwater messages to the public whenever appropriate

Audiences

- Engineers, architects, and developers
- Stormwater staff at City Hall
- Stormwater Inspectors
- Construction Management (as relates to Stormwater)
- Administrative staff

Tools

- Staff meetings
- Public meetings, workshops, trainings
- Educational handouts
- Website
- Maintaining of Stormwater Hotline

Public Involvement

Volunteer/Community Involvement Programs

The Stormwater Program promotes and encourages citizens to be involved with their community and the environment. The City maintains an Adopt-A-Site and Adopt-A-Street programs through the Parks and Recreation department. The City also supports efforts by Fayetteville Beautiful to keep our city clean and litter off of the street and out of the creeks through citywide clean ups.

Public Involvement Mechanism

The Stormwater Program utilizes the Stormwater Advisory Board to obtain feedback and direction from citizens regarding the program. The board consists of nine members who serve staggered two year terms. The members are appointed by City Council. The board meets monthly on the first Tuesday.

Hotline

The Stormwater Division maintains a 24 hour hotline that citizens can utilize to report flooding and pollution. The hotline is advertised through various media outlets.

Public Review and Comment

The Stormwater Division maintains its stormwater management plan online through the City's website, as well as to have copies available for pick up at City Hall for interested citizens.

Public Notice

All regular meetings, special meetings, and hearings of the Stormwater Advisory Board are filed in accordance with the North Carolina Open Meetings Law. Notices of meetings are posted in a central location in City Hall, as well as posted on the City's website. All records, files, and accounts are considered public records as provided in the North Carolina General Statutes.

The Stormwater Program advertises in the Fayetteville Observer when necessary for Public Hearing Notices to notify residents about proposed changes to the Stormwater Management Ordinance.

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Implementation

The following table lists tools and strategies to be used to implement the four communication goals of the City of Fayetteville Stormwater Division. This table allows for tracking of efforts and results (if they can be measured). This table can be expanded as new tools are created. When possible, the table lists an annual goal for each tool and mid/end of year updates. It is understood that there are some tools for which accurate performance measures cannot be developed. There are important tools in this plan, such as brochures, even though there is not a tangible way to measure their effectiveness. Time frames for tools are approximate.

		Tool/Program/Campaign	Goals Addressed	Tasks	Goal
Publications/Promotional Items/Websites	1	Utility Bill Insert	1	Collaborate with PWC to publish an article in their bi-monthly newsletter- "Your PWC Connections"	Approximately Every two years
	2	City Engineering Project Communications with citizens affected by Stormwater Projects	1,2,3	Collaborate with Engineering Division to effectively communicate project status to citizens affected by projects. Compiling mailing addresses through GIS, and send out project updates through Crime Prevention's community watch meetings	Update information as projects are completed
	3	Develop educational brochures	1	Continue to develop educational brochures to address timely topics affecting water quality.	As needed
	4	Pollution Prevention/IDDE	1	Review pollution prevention handouts and re-print as necessary in English and Spanish	Review on an annual basis
	5	Kid's brochure	1	Review kid's brochure and re-print as necessary in English and Spanish.	Review on an annual basis
	6	Stormee Journal	1	Review Stormee Journal and re-print as needed	Review on an annual basis
	7	Customer Service Communication	3,4	Review Fee Information Brochures as needed	Review on an annual basis
	8	News Media Outreach	1,2,3	Support stormwater related issues by issuing news releases to the public. Utilize news releases to get messages out. News releases should be issued seasonally for stormwater quality messages, large storm events, completion of CIP, and other major program changes. When appropriate, use City Facebook and Twitter accounts to release information.	Review on an annual basis
		Tool/Program/Campaign	Goals Addressed	Tasks	Goal
ONS/PTO Promotional Items/W	9	Website	1,2,3,4	Solicit feedback from users and staff. Encourage staff to provide information to be posted on website. Post relevant information in a timely manner. Add sections as needed.	Review and Update as needed

	10	Media Campaigns	1,2,3,4	Commercials and Stills on Fay TV 7, Ads in City View, Fayetteville Observer, and other local media. Renew contract with Clean Water Education Partnership for widespread media campaigns. Create a rotation of timely information dependent on season.	Review and update on an annual basis
	11	Promotional Items/Giveaways	1,2,3,4	Keep promotional items/giveaways stocked. Make sure to always include contact information on giveaways if possible. Look for new/different giveaways.	Order giveaways as needed
Public Outreach	12	Public Events	1,2,3	Attend Fayetteville Dogwood Festival, KidsFest, Earth Day events, Keep Fayetteville Beautiful, 4 th Friday, etc.	Attend events as they come up.
	13	School Presentations	1	Continue with Stormwater presentations to local schools, including Prime Time, and regular classrooms.	Conduct presentations as requested.
	14	Other Governmental Agencies	1	Work with other departments to promote stormwater message (Environmental Services, Parks and Recreation, etc.)	Conduct presentations as requested
	15	Social Media	1,2,3,4	Create engaging posts on Twitter, work with Corporate Communications to promote posts across other City Social Media pages	Create Posts as needed
Business and Trade	15	Governmental Agency Training	1	Work with Supervisors of various departments (City Landscaping, FAST, etc.) that have a potential to threaten water quality to provide training on a regular basis. Also, SWPPP for certain City Buildings/grounds	Conduct presentations as requested
	16	Commercial Companies	1	Work with inspectors to offer educational brochures and trainings to companies as needed for compliance.	Conduct presentations as requested
	17	Restaurants	1	Information is given out when inspectors conduct annual inspection. Informational posters handed out as needed.	Conduct presentations as needed.
		Tool/Program/Campaign	Goals Addressed	Tasks	Goal
Miscellaneous	18	Stormwater Fees	3	Update and revise fee information as needed	Update as needed
	19	Administrative Manual and Ordinance revisions	1,2,3	Continue to work with Engineering and Stormwater staff to provide updated information about Administrative Manual and Ordinance on website.	Review and update as needed
	20	Educational Signs	1,2	Create and maintain educational signs to display at various points throughout the City to include streets, roads and public parking lots, educating citizens on Stormwater	Update as needed

Conclusion

Through public outreach, the City of Fayetteville Stormwater Division creates awareness of the importance of stormwater and how through everyday activities, citizens impact it. This strategy outlines how the Stormwater Division plans to address the needs of its citizens, as well as complying with the NPDES MS4 Permit requirements.