



DESCRIPTION:

Public education/participation, like an ordinance or a piece of equipment, is not so much a best management practice as it is a method by which to implement BMPs. This information sheet highlights the importance of integrating elements of public education and participation into a municipality's overall plan for stormwater quality management.

A public education and participation plan provides the municipality with a strategy for educating its employees, the public, and businesses about the importance of protecting stormwater from improperly used, stored, and disposed of pollutants. Municipal employees must be trained, especially those that work in departments not directly related to stormwater but whose actions affect stormwater. Residents must become aware that a variety of hazardous products are used in the home and that their improper use and disposal can pollute stormwater. Increased public awareness also facilitates public scrutiny of industrial and municipal activities and will likely increase public reporting of incidents.

APPROACH:

- ▶ Pattern a new program after the many established programs around the country.
- ▶ Implement public education/participation as a coordinated campaign in which each message is related to the last.
- ▶ Present a clear and consistent message and image to the public regarding how they contribute to stormwater pollution and what they can do to reduce it.
- ▶ Utilize multi-media to reach the full range of audiences.
- ▶ Translate messages into the foreign languages of the community to reach the full spectrum of your populace and to avoid misinterpretation of messages.
- ▶ Create an awareness and identification with the local watershed.
- ▶ Use everyday language in all public pieces. Use outside reviewers to highlight and reduce the use of technical terminology, acronyms, and jargon.
- ▶ Make sure all statements have a sound, up-to-date technical basis. Do not contribute to the spread of misinformation.
- ▶ Break complicated subjects into smaller more simple concepts. Present these concepts to the public in a metered and organized way to avoid "overloading" and confusing the audience.

LIMITATIONS:

- ▶ None.

OBJECTIVES

- New Development
- Residential
- Commercial Activities
- Industrial Activities
- Municipal Facilities
- Illegal Discharges



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TARGETED POLLUTANTS

- Sediment
- Nutrients
- Heavy Metals
- Toxic Materials
- Oxygen Demanding Substance
- Oil & Grease
- Floatable Materials
- Bacteria & Viruses
- High Impact
- Medium Impact
- Low or Unknown Impact

IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

- Capital Costs
- O&M Costs
- Regulatory
- Training
- Staffing
- Administrative
- High
- Medium
- Low