

STORMWATER

TIP OF THE WEEK WEEK 36 - SEPTEMBER 7, 2022

WHY MS4 IMPORTANT?

The MS4 program was created due to the worsening quality of our water. The Environmental Protection Agency implemented regulations to help prevent pollution. Under the 1987 Clean Water Act Amendments, the U.S. EPA developed new regulations to address storm water that might impact water quality. These new "Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System" (MS4) regulations were set up in two Phases dependent upon population and are enforced by the U.S. EPA. In West Virginia the WV Department of Environmental Protection regulates MS4 permits for the state. This MS4 system is broken into two categories, Phase I & Phase II.

The City of Nitro is a MS4 Phase II Community. The 1999 Phase II regulation requires small MS4s in U.S. Census Bureau defined urbanized areas, as well as MS4s designated by the permitting authority, to obtain NPDES permit coverage for their stormwater discharges. Phase II also includes non-traditional MS4s such as public universities, departments of transportation, hospitals and prisons.

Phase II is intended to further reduce adverse impacts to water quality and aquatic habitat by instituting the use of controls on the unregulated sources of stormwater discharges that have the greatest likelihood of causing continued environmental degradation.

MS4 communities get authorization from the WV DEP to legally discharge stormwater into local stream and rivers, with an "NPDES" permit; often called a MS4 Permit. To meet the terms of their NPDES Permit, MS4 communities need to develop a "Stormwater Management Plan" (SWMP).

Because every MS4 community faces unique stormwater challenges each management plan is unique. But every SWMP includes the same six focus areas that the EPA considers essential for success, called Minimum Control Measures or "MCMs":

- Public Education and Outreach
- Public Involvement and Participation
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE)
- Sediment and Erosion Control
- Post-Construction Stormwater Control Measures
- Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping

EXAMPLES OF STORM RUNOFF POLLUTION AT HOME

