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| Small_COLOR_LGROW_Logo | **Public Engagement Committee**  **Wednesday, April 10, 2024**  **2:00-3:00 PM**  ***Virtual Meeting***  <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84700209106?pwd=EAYY63ymckfNbyzajE2oSErqcTwP3H.1> |

**Agenda**

1. Welcome and Icebreaker
   1. Icebreaker: Tell us your favorite movie
   2. Attendance:
      1. Kate Milzarski – City of Hudsonville
      2. Amy Koets – Kent County Road Commission
      3. Grant Simons – City of Wyoming
      4. Meghan Sulka – City of Walker
      5. Sarah Burgess – City of Grand Haven
      6. Kenneth Wiley – City of East Grand Rapids
      7. Justin Stadt – Georgetown Township
      8. Ken Yonker: Kent County Drain Commission
      9. Cara Decker - LGROW
      10. Rachell Nagorsen - LGROW
      11. Robert Cloy II - LGROW
2. [Public Education Plan Overview](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/595e6f5a197aeaae91c1bedd/t/5f46716764d73155fa378346/1598452073064/PEP+Master.pdf)
   1. Past categories covered:
      1. Personal watershed stewardship
      2. Ultimate stormwater discharge locations and potential impacts
   2. Category focus: Public Reporting of Illicit Discharges: Encourage public reporting of the presence of illicit discharges or improper disposal into the stormwater system.
      1. Key Messages
         1. An illicit discharge is anything that enters the storm sewer other than stormwater
         2. Chemicals, oil, detergents, or yard waste should never be dumped into storm drains.
         3. Illicit discharges reduce water quality in local waterways.
         4. Illicit discharges should be reported to your local community for inspection and cleanup.
      2. Target Audiences
         1. Watershed residents, subwatershed groups, neighborhood associations, schools, anglers, business owners, boaters, campers, emergency responders.
         2. Pretty much anyone and everyone.
      3. Delivery Mechanisms
         1. This is another category where most of our delivery mechanisms (website, newsletter, social media) are designed to address.
         2. Storm drain or stream cleanup events, adopt a drain are the clearest ways to connect the community (our eyes and ears) to this.
         3. Outreach to businesses with our EPA flyers is another very important way to do this. The two instances of egregious dumping I came across in my past position was by employees following boss’s orders (dumping stuff into the drain).
      4. [Illicit Discharge Reporting Directory](https://www.lgrow.org/report/)
         1. Review your community’s contact. Is it up to date?
         2. Sometimes enforcement from the community is needed.
         3. Grant: Complaint came from residential email. What is the recommendation from LGROW on when Illicit Discharge is reported?
         4. Kate: Hudsonville sends letter in the mail, so they have record that a notification was sent out. Planning department usually does that.
         5. Rachell: Send a letter and keep a record on their file so there’s a history of communication. Send any updated information to LGROW.
3. 2024 Public Education Giveaway Materials
   1. Item pickup/delivery
      1. Any communities who still need to pick stuff up?
         1. Rachell: Will reach out to different communities to set up delivery or pickup.
   2. Item highlight: Watershed kiosk flyer
      1. This is a direct way to satisfy PEP permitting requirements if they post it at a park kiosk. Let us know and we can laminate it for you. Great way to spread awareness about LGROW.
      2. Any ideas of places this could be posted in your community or another park you visit?
         1. Ken: Could use a couple Watershed Kiosk Flyers on drain projects to put them up around after completion of projects. Helps educate residents on what a watershed is. The more people that are educated, the more connected they’ll become to watershed related issues.
4. Community Share
   1. What’s one item you shy away from on the checklist and why?
      1. Amy: PEP Checklist Item #1. Not sure how to do a community newsletter or news outlet since the Road Commission doesn’t have one. Could use ideas and help on how to publish those materials.
      2. Meghan: Still new to the program, but this list is a good starting point for her new role.
      3. Kate: Rachell and I can help different communities put together materials, so they’re successful in checking off items on the PEP Checklist. Anything you find in the PEP spreadsheet, is applicable to the community newsletter and news outlet.
      4. Rachell: EGLE likes to see these educational postings in community newsletters since the audiences are sometimes different from social media. Rachell will think through how LGROW can modify the spreadsheet to fit different organizations better.
      5. Ken: Put together several bullet points and modify it so its seasonally educational materials. Need to focus on bigger groups. As Drain Commissioner, in the names of protecting the county drains and county water, the office can send a reminder to different organizations (landscaping, snow plowers..etc.)
      6. Rachell: Bigger platforms are great, but they cost money. There is a lot of community engagement on social media postings.
      7. Amy: Quarterly bulletins that go to all staff; does that count as a PEP checklist item? Or does it need to go out into the community?
      8. Rachell: Educational materials to staff counts, and it can also be used to check off Public Education and staff training requirements.
      9. Kate: Trying to include educational materials on back of billing statements that goes to every resident in Hudsonville.
   2. Have you created anything that could be shared?
      1. Grant: Sent out letter to neighborhood that covers fertilizer information; could also be sent out to landscape companies.
5. Public Engagement Committee Goal Review
   1. Existing Goals:
      1. To support programs, events, materials, and activities that help communities meet the educational requirements of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permits (MS4s)
      2. To document successful implementation of the Information and Education Plan of the federally-approved Lower Grand River Watershed Management Plan
         1. How does this relate to the committee? Or is this something that LGROW does?
            1. Kate: The 1st goal is good representation of what this group accomplishes. Not sure how the 2nd goal fits into our committee; feels like something LGROW would facilitate internally.
            2. Grant: The 2nd goal; this committee has never really talked about the documentation process.
            3. Rachell: This committee brings more collaboration that helps inform LGROW what each communities needs are. Documentation is more something that LGROW does-figure out what EGLE wants and generate a report to correlate with that.
      3. To cooperate and collaborate with LGROW’s network to foster public education and outreach regarding shared environmental priorities.
   2. Discussion Questions and Feedback
      1. Amy: Wants to set-up a stream clean up; Rachell will reach out for further planning and logistics. This group also helps educate myself, and I can share that with my community.
      2. Meghan: Is the 2023 PEP Checklist different than 2024 PEP Checklist?
         1. Rachell: The 2024 PEP Checklist was updated slightly. Will send an updated copy to Meghan and Sarah.
6. 2024 Events
   1. Upcoming LGROW and partner events
      1. Ottawa County Water Quality Forum this Friday at the Fillmore Complex. Free to attend.
      2. [River Rally](https://www.rivernetwork.org/connect-learn/river-rally/): Downtown GR, 5/13 thru 5/16.
         1. Events open to the public:
            1. Monday, May 13, 6-8 pm: Welcome Reception at Blue Bridge
            2. Wednesday May 15, 6-9 pm: Party at Ah-Nab-Awen Park
      3. [LGROW Spring Forum](https://www.lgrow.org/springforum): 6/13 thru 6/15
         1. Thursday, June 13th: Kick-off Welcome Party
         2. Friday June 14th: Morning MS4 meeting
         3. Friday June 14th : Afternoon Grand Lady Riverboat
         4. Saturday, June 15th: Kayaking and Paddle Boarding Outing
7. Resources (sticky)
   1. Dropbox Link: [MS4 Public Education Social Media + Website Materials - Dropbox](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/87butz10gwm9y21/AAAy85o28ofu0agcuClC1J-Sa?dl=0)
   2. Community Newsletter Articles: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/38jspdlppbb5qne/AAByZAvayKbgbM3AOtDsZDwSa?dl=0>
   3. LGROW check-out catalogue for local events
      1. Enviroscape
      2. Adopt a Drain Kit Ready to Use
      3. Stream Cleanup Kits
      4. Activities and Games
      5. Tri-fold Display
      6. Salt Watch Kits
8. Next meeting: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 from 2:00-3:00 PM. Virtual.
   1. Be prepared to answer the question: **Tell us what items you received/requested from the giveaways and how you plan to use them this year.**
   2. Future meetings: October 16, November 13, 2:00-3:00 PM – Virtual until further notice