

# **PART 3 - PEP**

## **REGIONAL PEP**

The purpose of the PEP is to promote, publicize, and facilitate education for the purpose of encouraging the public to reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater to the maximum extent practicable. The PEP was developed by the Permittees in the LGRW and submitted to the MDEQ with the stormwater permit application in March 2003. The MDEQ approved the PEP and issued a Certificate of Coverage (CoC), which included a directive to begin implementation of the PEP by January 1, 2004. The PEP was later updated by the LGRW Stormwater Committee and FTC&H and submitted to the MDEQ on September 1, 2010. Public education activities have been reported to the MDEQ on an annual basis since October 1, 2004, to August 1, 2011. This section provides a report of public education activities implemented between August 1, 2011, and July 31, 2012.

### **A. PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

A LGRW Stormwater Education Committee was formed in 1999 to begin development and implementation of the PEP. Since that time, the committee has met on a regular basis to discuss and plan activities scheduled for implementation in the PEP. The 2011/2012 committee included the following participants:

- Mr. Dave Beck - Kent County Road Commission (KCRC)
- Ms. Amanda St. Amour - MDEQ
- Ms. Bonnie Broadwater - City of Walker
- Ms. Linda Brown - Ottawa County Drain Commissioner's Office (OCDC)
- Mr. Mike Bouwkamp - City of Rockford
- Mr. Ron Carr - City of Grandville
- Mr. John Gorney - City of Kentwood
- Ms. Amy Klapko - Kent County Drain Commissioner's Office (KCDC)
- Ms. Carrie Rivette - City of Grand Rapids
- Ms. Nicole Pasch - City of Grand Rapids
- Ms. Kristen Wieland - Kent County Resource Recovery
- Ms. Cheryl Davidson - City of Grand Haven
- Mr. Ryan Cotton - Village of Spring Lake
- Mr. John Stuparits - Village of Spring Lake
- Mr. Jerry Alkema - Allendale Charter Township
- Mr. Steve Peterson – Cascade Charter Township
- Ms. E. Wendy Ogilvie - FTC&H
- Ms. Laurie Beth Nederveld - FTC&H
- Mr. Kevin Lignell - Grand Valley Metropolitan Council (GVMC)

## **B. PEP IMPLEMENTATION IN YEAR 9**

This section describes the public education activities implemented by the Permittees in the ninth year of PEP implementation, August 1, 2011, and July 31, 2012. The following report is according to the proposed updated PEP, which meets the requirements of the 2004 approved PEP. Target audiences, messages, and delivery mechanisms are described for each Public Education Topic. Public Education Topics were defined in the Updated PEP (2010 to 2014) and were identified based on the MDEQ's PEP guidance document dated April 12, 2010.

### **Public Education Topic 1 - Personal Watershed Stewardship**

*PEP Objective 1:* Educate the public about their responsibility and stewardship in their watershed.

*Target Audience:* Watershed residents, community groups, business associations, and city and township officials.

*Content of Message:* You live in the Grand River Watershed, which flows into Lake Michigan. Water quality in lakes and streams is greatly affected by our everyday activities. By taking water quality protection personally, you will help improve our community's water resources.

*Delivery Method:*

- A link from the Permittees' websites to the LGRW's website, [www.lowergrandriver.org](http://www.lowergrandriver.org), was maintained or was established. The watershed website provides information on nonpoint source (NPS) pollution, local watershed issues, water science education, and watershed management.
- Permittees featured the LGRW stormwater display at local libraries or municipal, township, or county offices. The display provides tips to homeowners on how to reduce stormwater pollution in their own backyards. Several Permittees have purchased their own display boards for permanent display.
- Permittees distributed 963 *Catch a Ride* coloring books to residents in the LGRW.
- Permittees displayed their lamppost banners purchased in 2011 to advertise the presence of the Grand River and Plaster Creek Watersheds. The banners featured the LGRW logo and the message "Yours to Protect."

### **Public Education Topic 2 - Ultimate Stormwater Discharge Location and Potential Impacts**

*Target Audience:* Residents, Visitors, Riparian Landowners, Local Units of Government, Teachers, Schools, Businesses, and Girl/Boy Scouts.

*Content of Message:* 1) Storm drains connect to your local lakes and streams, not a water treatment plant. 2) Prevent pollution from entering your storm drains and protect the health of your family, your community, and the Grand River.

*Delivery Method:*

- For new construction, Permittees installed storm catch basin backs/grates with a fish symbol and the message "No Dumping - Drains to Lake or Stream."
- Eleven Permittees ordered a total of 214 storm drain markers from East Jordan Iron Works. Markers advertise the message "Dump No Waste. Drains to Waterway" or "Dump No Waste. Drains to Lake." Permittees installed these markers near catch basins to discourage illicit dumping.

### **Public Education Topic 3 - Public Reporting of Illicit Discharges**

*Target Audience:* Residents, Visitors, Riparian Landowners, Local Units of Government, and Businesses.

*Content of Message:* Report illicit discharges to your city or township to prevent pollution from entering your storm drains and protect the health of your family, your community, and the Grand River.

*Delivery Method:*

- Permittees distributed copies of the "*Citizen Report Form*" to their residents. This form included information on how to report illicit discharges and connections to one's community. Permittees individually customized these brochures for their residents.
- A reporting sheet, developed in 2005, was used by the Permittees to track resident calls concerning illicit discharges and connections.
- Permittees distributed the article "*How you as an Employee Can Help Reduce Pollution Entering the Grand River*" to their employees. This article encourages employees to report stormwater discharges to their community's stormwater coordinator.

### **Public Education Topic 4 - Personal Actions that can Impact the Watershed**

*Target Audience:* Residents, Visitors, Riparian Landowners, Local Units of Government, Teachers, Students, Landscaping/Lawn Care Companies, Commercial Power Washers, Carpet Cleaning Companies, and Golf Courses.

*Content of Message:* 1) Avoid scorching your lawn. Use slow-release fertilizers only 2 to 3 times per year. Non-phosphorus types are best for the environment. 2) Lower your water bill. Install a rain barrel to capture and reuse your stormwater. 3) Wash your car at a commercial car wash or on your lawn.

Otherwise, dirty, oily water on your driveway will flow to your storm drain and eventually your local lake or stream. 4) Pick up your pet waste and dispose of it properly; otherwise, it could end up in the Grand River and on your favorite Lake Michigan beach.

*Delivery Method:*

- Permittees distributed the newsletter article “*New Michigan Law Restricts Phosphorus Fertilizers*” to their residents via their webpage or community newsletter. This article describes the new Michigan fertilizer law and encourages homeowners to use phosphorus-free fertilizer.
- Permittees distributed the newsletter article “*What is a Rain Garden?*” to their residents via their webpage or community newsletter. This article discusses the benefits of rain gardens and how you can plant one.
- Permittees distributed 1,000 copies of *Go Green Lawn Care Tips* card, developed by Michigan State University Extension (MSUE), to their residents. These cards provide tips on weed and insect control and give recommendations on when to fertilize and the types of fertilizers to use on your lawn.
- Permittees distributed 1,075 copies of the “*Use Phosphorus Free Fertilizer*” flyers, developed by Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, to their residents. These flyers provide information on soil testing, the fertilizer law and how to apply it, and protecting water quality.
- Permittees distributed 1,075 copies of the “*Get the Most out of Rain*” flyer, developed by Mid-America Regional Council, Kansas City, Missouri, to their residents. The flyer provides ideas for a rain friendly yard including information on how to save and reuse rain water, how to build a rain garden and how to disconnect downspouts.
- Permittees distributed the newsletter article “*How You Can Help Reduce Pollution Entering the Grand River*” to their residents via their webpage or community newsletter. This article encourages residents to dispose of pet waste, paints, motor oil, etc., in the appropriate locations, not in the storm drains.

**Public Education Topic 5 - Waste Management Assistance**

*Target Audience:* Residents, Visitors, Riparian Landowners, Local Units of Government, and Auto Repair Shops.

*Content of Message:* 1) Protect your family's health, dispose of unwanted paints, solvents, and cleaners at your county collection center. 2) Recycle used oil and automotive fluids. Just one gallon of used motor oil dumped down a catch basin can contaminate one million gallons of your drinking water.

*Delivery Method:*

- Permittees distributed 755 copies of their county's household hazardous waste guide or flyer.
- Permittees distributed the newsletter article "*Guide To Household Hazardous Waste Disposal*" to their residents via their webpage or community newsletter. This article defines household hazardous water and lists common wastes, along with providing information on where to dispose of these wastes.
- Permittees distributed the newsletter article "*How You Can Help Reduce Pollution Entering The Grand River*" to their residents via their webpage or community newsletter. This article encourages residents to dispose of pet waste, paints, motor oil, etc., in the appropriate locations, not in the storm drains.
- Permittees distributed 1,075 copies of the pamphlet "West Michigan, Take Back Meds," to their residents. The pamphlet encourages the proper disposal of unused/unwanted/expired medications and lists locations for disposal.

**Public Education Topic 6 - Septic System Maintenance**

*Target Audience:* Septic System Owners and Local Units of Government.

*Content of Message:* 1) If you have a septic system, have it pumped out every 3 to 5 years to avoid a costly septic system failure. Failing septic systems can leak bacteria into your local stream, the Grand River, and eventually Lake Michigan, causing beach closures.

*Delivery Method:*

- Permittees distributed the newsletter article "*Maintaining Your Septic System*" to their residents via their webpage or community newsletter. This article encourages residents to maintain their septic system.
- Permittees distributed 460 copies of the "*Do you know where your septic system is?*" flyer, developed by the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program, to their residents. The flyer provides information on what a septic system and septic take are and what a septic tank and drain field do.

## **Public Education Topics 7 and 8 - Benefits of Native Vegetation and Management of Riparian Lands**

*Target Audience:* Residents, Visitors, Riparian Landowners, Local Units of Government (e.g. Parks Departments), Teachers, Students, and Faith-based Organizations.

*Content of Message:* Plant native plants in your yard or garden. Natives naturally need less water, fertilizers, and pesticides saving you time and money.

*Delivery Method:*

- Permittees distributed 1,000 copies of *Go Green Lawn Care Tips* card, developed by Michigan State University Extension (MSUE), to their residents. These cards provide tips on weed and insect control and give recommendations on when to fertilize and the types of fertilizers to use on your lawn.
- Permittees distributed 1,075 copies of the “*Use Phosphorus Free Fertilizer*” flyers, developed by Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, to their residents. These flyers provide information on soil testing, the fertilizer law and how to apply it, and protection water quality.
- Permittees distributed 1,075 copies of the “*Get the Most Out of Rain*” flyer, developed by Mid-America Regional Council, Kansas City, Missouri, to their residents. The flyer provides ideas for a rain friendly yard.
- Permittees distributed the newsletter article “*Meijer Stores Encourage Non-invasive Plant*” to their residents via their webpage or community newsletter. This article encourages residents to purchase and use non-invasive plants.

## **Public Education Topic 9 - Entity of Specific Pollutants**

*Target Audience:* Local Units of Government (e.g. County Road Commissions, Department of Public Works [DPW]), and Restaurants.

*Content of Message:* Prevent pollution from entering your storm drains and protect the health of your family, your community, and the Grand River.

*Delivery Method:*

- Permittees distributed 1,075 copies of the pamphlet “West Michigan, Take Back Meds,” to their residents. The pamphlet encourages the proper disposal of unused/unwanted/expired medications and lists locations for disposal.
- Permittees distributed the newsletter article “How You Can Help Reduce Pollution Entering the Grand River,” to their employees at department meetings. This article encourages residents to dispose of pet waste, paints, motor oil, etc., in the appropriate locations, not in the storm drains.

## **C. EVALUATION MEASURES**

This section includes a description of the quantitative and qualitative evaluation measures of PEP effectiveness implemented between August 1, 2011, and July 31, 2012.

### **Community Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation Measures of Effectiveness**

Permittees completed *PEP Questionnaires* to provide a quantitative and qualitative evaluation of their individual stormwater education efforts. Based on the input provided by the Permittees, the most popular brochure topics were those covering native vegetation/rain garden/riparian buffers, proper use of pesticides/fertilizers/herbicides and household hazardous waste management.

### **Updated 2013 PEP**

An updated PEP was developed describing a new five-year strategy designed to promote, publicize, and facilitate watershed education for encouraging the public to reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater. As required, the PEP defines target audiences, develops specific messages, and selects delivery mechanisms to promote the goals and objectives of reducing stormwater runoff. The PEP includes mechanisms for evaluating the success and effectiveness of the plan. The measurable goals include realistic data collection and milestones to be quantified and compared. A schedule was also prepared for the implementation of the various components of the PEP, indicating the dates for distribution of educational materials and the completion of activities. The PEP also builds on the Information and Education (I&E) Strategy developed for the LGRW as part of the LGRW Management Plan (FTC&H, 2011).