

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING SERVICES

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PRESS RELEASE **Lycoming County MS4 Program** **Earth Day Update** **4/22/05**

Since the passage of the Clean Water Act (CWA) in 1977, the quality of our Nation's waters has improved dramatically. Despite this progress, approximately 40 percent of surveyed U.S. waterbodies are still impaired by pollution and do not meet water quality standards. A leading source of this impairment is polluted stormwater runoff.

EPA promulgated a Phase I storm water program in 1990 that requires permittees to address stormwater runoff pollutants from (1) "medium" and "large" Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (**MS4s**) generally serving populations of 100,000 or greater, (2) construction activity disturbing 5 acres of land or greater, and (3) ten categories of industrial or institutional activity.

The Stormwater Phase II Program, which went into effect in March of 2003, is the next step to preserve, protect, and improve the nation's water resources from polluted storm water runoff. Phase II requires smaller municipalities, including those in the Williamsport area, to implement stormwater management programs and practices. In addition, operators of small construction activities that disturb more than one acre of land are also required to control sediment pollution.

The Lycoming County Economic Development & Planning Services Department and seven Williamsport area municipalities and entities are working together to prevent stormwater pollution from construction, new development, and illegal discharges to the storm sewer system. The municipalities are "cleaning their own house" by identifying and implementing pollution prevention and good housekeeping practices. The County has provided computerized mapping of the stormwater system and Geographic Information Services.

The Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (**MS4**) Program applies initially to the City of Williamsport, Old Lycoming Township, Loyalsock Township, South Williamsport Borough, Duboistown Borough, Montoursville Borough, and Penn College and will likely apply to other municipalities in the outlying areas within the next decade. The MS4 Partnership is a by-

product of the Greater Williamsport Alliance. By working together in a coordinated manner, the participating municipalities will meet their Federal MS4 requirements in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible.

Municipalities have either completed or are in the process of adopting Ordinances to prevent illegal discharge of pollutants, manage post-construction stormwater runoff, and require erosion and sediment controls for new land disturbances. There is also a community education and participation component as part of this Program with the goal of involving municipal officials, engineers, developers, and the public in protecting our vital water resources.

Citizens can help maintain the quality of our waterways by being careful not to over apply fertilizer on lawns, keeping motor oil and other pollutants out of storm drains, properly disposing of household hazardous wastes, and by reporting pollution to municipal, county, or DEP officials. Educational materials about stormwater management will be available at municipal offices, distributed to schools, and posted on the County website www.lyco.org.

Please contact Kevin McJunkin at the Lycoming County Planning Office (320-2130) or any of the participating municipalities for more information about storm water management.

Authorized:



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