

## **MS4 Information Article** **April 2007**

As of March 10, 2003, the Town of Charlton has been required to participate in a Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mandated program for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4). The purpose of this program is to control the inflow of pollutants into the town's storm sewers and drainage ditches. Products such as oil, antifreeze, litter, animal wastes, fertilizer, pesticides and sediment from erosion can be washed into the storm drain system during rain storms or by melting snow. Eventually this untreated storm water flows into our streams, and lakes and can impact water quality.

The MS4 program contains six techniques designed to reduce these "nonpoint sources" of water pollution. Two of these measures include public education and public participation. It is important that all of us recognize our role in protecting the environment. Steps that can be taken to protect water quality include:

- Never dump automotive waste materials or used household products into a storm drain, anywhere on the ground or in a basement sump pump.
- Make an effort to buy environmentally friendly household products
- Always use household and lawn care products in accordance with instructions
- Be conscious of what lies "downstream" when washing cars or applying lawn care products
- Avoid long term exposure of uncovered soil stockpiles, establish vegetation to prevent erosion
- Clean up pet waste and dispose in a method that will prevent introduction into storm sewers or ditches

Residents interested in a more proactive role are encouraged to volunteer for a cleanup event. Several "adopt a road" and "adopt a stream" cleanups have been conducted in town and more will be planned in the future. These events are a fun way to enjoy a beautiful day, meet new people and serve a worthwhile cause. Anyone interested in volunteering their time toward these efforts can contact Marv Schorr, Chairman of the Environmental Conservation Commission at 399-4161.

For more information on the MS4 program and ways that you can help, please visit:

[www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dow/mainpage.htm](http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dow/mainpage.htm)  
[www.epa.gov/OWOW/NPS/qa.html](http://www.epa.gov/OWOW/NPS/qa.html)  
[www.naturallyhome.com](http://www.naturallyhome.com)  
[www.townofcharlton.org](http://www.townofcharlton.org)

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