

# 2017 Phase I NPDES Annual Report for City of Tacoma

## Q. 67 Attachment – Public Education and Outreach Efforts (S5.C.10)

### PROGRAMS

**Make a Splash Grant program** (*\$50,000 set aside for grants of up to \$4,000. Activities must be related to surface water education, protection or restoration efforts.*)

**2017:** Twelve applications were submitted for a total request of \$44,100.00. All twelve projects were awarded. See [www.cityoftacoma.org/makeasplash](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/makeasplash) for a list of past grant projects.

**2018:** Continue to seek new audiences and inspire innovative projects.

**EnviroChallengers** (*Two environmental educators visit Tacoma classrooms and attend community events to spread surface water, wastewater, and solid waste and recycling messages.*)

Continue teaching in-school and after school lessons. The EnviroChallengers also lead tours, staff information booths and attend community speaking engagements to communicate Environmental Services messages.

EnviroChallenger lessons currently being offered are Save our Salmon, Down the Storm Drain; Green-Go-Bingo; Our World is in Jeopardy; Talking Trash; After the Flush; Toxic Toilets and Sick Sinks; SWI: Surface Water Investigation; Water, Water, Everywhere; Greener Cleaner Go Fish; Survivor Salmon; and Flush Out the Facts.

**2017:** Taught 732 lessons; participated in 35 special school events, after school lessons, summer programs, and home school lessons; and attended 28 community events.

**2018:** Continue to educate Tacoma youth and the community at large about issues related to sustainable choices, surface water, wastewater, solid waste and recycling. EnviroChallengers will look at opportunities to expand lessons to include other sustainability messages and launch a new lesson about the benefits of trees.

### **T-Town City Services Expo**

Starting in 2016, the City of Tacoma sponsors an biannual “T-Town: Play, Explore, Learn City Services Expo” featuring demonstrations and activities for the entire family and raise awareness about the many City services available, while also gathering ideas and feedback about how to utilize City resources. The Surface Water sponsored display includes interactive displays with green stormwater features including rain gardens and permeable pavement as well as the separated storm sewer system. Nearly 3,000 attendees participate.

### **Business Source Control Outreach**

Continuing efforts to educate business owners on source control BMPs during spill/complaint responses and regular business inspections. The intent is to make business owners and property managers more aware of the importance of regularly maintaining their onsite stormwater system and best management practices to help protect local waterways and reduce stormwater pollution.

**2017:** The City of Tacoma’s Environmental Compliance team provided information regarding source control best management practices to 478 sites.

**2018:** Develop additional educational materials and website resources for Source Control Inspectors to use with businesses.

**Storm Drain Marking** (*Work with volunteer groups to try to have every storm drain in Tacoma marked with a “no dumping” message.*)

Expanding the City’s storm drain marking program to include free storm drain marking to businesses with on-site catch basins.

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**2017:** Two curb marking events were held in 2017.

**2018:** Planning for additional volunteer events. The City is looking into ways to enhance this program's strategy, and to recruit more volunteers to mark curbs in priority areas.

**Puget Sound Starts Here (PSSH) Campaign** *(The campaign's purpose is to educate residents about how their daily actions affect surface water quality, and empower them to make good choices throughout their day in order to keep pollution out of our local surface water resources.)*

The City is participating with neighboring cities and counties, Department of Ecology, and Puget Sound Partnership in a regional stormwater education campaign, Puget Sound Starts Here. Additionally, Utility bill inserts and EnviroTalk quarterly newsletter included PSSH messaging – year round.

PSSH Month events and activities have included coasters distributed to restaurants throughout Tacoma and to Cheney Stadium, a City Council proclamation, and PSSH Day at the Rainiers (which included PSSH messaging in "The Dirt" baseball game program, PSA's on the game board, PA announcements, and information booth).

The City has co-branded PSSH promotion with Bike Month using the tagline: Bike everywhere – because – Puget Sound Starts Here.

During 2015-2017, the City distributed special PSSH version phone apps for Chinook Book coupons from sustainable businesses in the Puget Sound region, to provide coupons to assist with Sound-healthy behaviors like composting and picking up after your dog as well as access to rotating inline ads with PSSH target messages.

**2017:** Distributed PSSH branded Chinook Book coupons.

**2018:** The City will continue to co-brand stormwater pollution prevention messages with the PSSH campaign. Explore ways to extend the PSSH campaign within Tacoma while working with Pierce County and other jurisdictions on regional campaign efforts. Participate in PSSH Month in May 2018.

### Car Wash Coupons

The City is now focusing on distributing free car wash coupons and encouraging charities to sell car wash coupons for fundraising rather than hosting charity car washes. Also provide technical assistance and recommendations on how to fundraise while avoiding discharges to storm drains.

**2017:** Promoting the use of commercial car washes through Puget Sound Car Wash Association coupons for community fundraising efforts.

**2018:** The City will continue distributing free car wash coupons and encouraging the use of commercial car washes.

**Pet Waste Program** *(Pet waste stations and education about proper pet waste disposal and the problems pet waste causes for surface water.)*

Piloted 20 dog waste bag stations with multi-family property managers and residential homeowners as sponsors to restock bags and monitor usage. The program is modeled after Pierce County's program.

Continued to emphasize pet waste messaging through various communication tools (surface water website, EnviroChallenger lessons, EnviroTalk newsletter, utility bill inserts, social media, etc.)

Dog mascot, "Scoopy Doo" and a "Poo Toss" game are also commonly seen at Environmental Services sponsored community and family fun events.

**2017:** Continued with the dog waste station pilot program.

**2018:** Continue education and outreach efforts. Also, expand the pet waste program to include sponsored pet waste stations in additional neighborhoods.

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**Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Program** *(City of Tacoma and Pierce County residents may dispose of household hazardous waste at the City's transfer facility free of charge. Customers must show proof of residency with a current photo ID.)*

Continuing to spread the word through Environmental Services publications and website.

**2017:** 4,777 City of Tacoma and 4,493 Pierce County customers turned in household and hazardous waste at the facility, with 123 tons diverted. Piloted Safer Cleaner Kits program collecting pledges and distributing over 200 kits to families through exchange vouchers at the EnviroHouse and direct distribution through Safer Cleaner Workshops, the Tacoma Nature Center Preschool and Tacoma Pierce County Health Department Nurse-Family Partnership home visits. **2018:** Continue to distribute Safer Cleaner Kits through Tacoma Nature Center Preschool and Tacoma Pierce County Health Department Nurse-Family Partnership. Continue to educate the public about the need for proper disposal and where they can take their hazardous wastes.

**Natural Yard Care** *(Continue to spread the word through regular Environmental Services efforts such as the EnviroHouse exhibits, booth displays, etc. Also partnering with the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department and Pierce County Surface Water on natural yard care.)*

The City publicized natural yard care messages through articles in the EnviroTalk publication, utility bill inserts, and a variety of educational handouts and booth displays. In partnership with Pierce County, the City also piloted a healthy yard care "yard coach" visit offer to residents in the Healthy Homes Healthy Neighborhoods focus areas and promoted "Ask a Master Gardener" at WSU Pierce County Master Gardener clinics and the hotline as a preferred solution to yard care problems.

**2017:** The City co-sponsored an ECO-Pro landscaping professional training in spring 2017 funded through the Make a Splash grant program.

**2018:** The City will continue to publicize natural yard care messages and offer related workshops to homeowners through the EnviroHouse. Start promoting ECO-Pro landscaping professionals to property owners.

**Don't Drip and Drive Campaign** *(helps bring awareness throughout the Puget Sound region on the impacts of car leaks (oils, coolant and other toxins) to surface water. Under the program, the Department of Ecology has teamed up with other state, local and non-profit organizations to offer free Fix That Leak! workshops.)*

Fix That Leak! Workshops are taught by certified automotive instructors from local, participating technical schools including a 2-hour class about basic automotive systems, maintenance and information about the impacts of leaks and the option to stay up to 2 hours later to have their vehicle inspected by the class instructor.

A website ([fixcarleaks.org](http://fixcarleaks.org)) was also developed which contains information on how to diagnose car leaks, tips on what to expect from your mechanic, schedule and registration details for upcoming auto leak workshops, and a list of participating inspection and repair shops throughout the region.

Leak Testing Events have been held at the Tacoma Landfill, Cheney Stadium, Center for Urban Waters and the Annual Sustainability Expo to provide free leak tests and 10% discount at participating repair shops.

**2017:** Drip testing event held during Sustainability Expo at the Greater Tacoma Convention Center, and another drip test event held at the Center for Urban Waters during Earth Month.

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**2018:** Investigating additional drip testing events.

### Private Stormwater Facility Maintenance

This program assures property owners have access to their drawings and operation and maintenance instructions for privately-owned stormwater facilities. Provide technical assistance to homeowners and business owners as requested.

**2017:** The City is assembling drawings of privately-owned stormwater facilities to make them available to the public upon request.

**2018:** The City will provide a public service announcement in the Spring EnviroTalk magazine to help homeowners identify if there is a stormwater facility on their property that requires maintenance.

### Dumpster Maintenance

This program is modeled after the regionally developed dumpster behavior change program that was piloted by the City of Bothell. A dumpster sticker is installed on each dumpster to cue users to keep the lid closed and don't overfill the dumpster. An information card is provided to dumpster customers (property managers) with the contact information to Tacoma Solid Waste Management to replace their leaking dumpsters for free.

**2018:** The City will distribute the dumpster stickers and information cards to all Tacoma Solid Waste Management dumpster customers.

### Residential Rain Garden Program

This program included a 1-year pilot rebate and assistance program to help residents in the Flett and Leach Creek watersheds to build rain gardens on their property. The program offered technical assistance in layout and design, free soil testing by Pierce Conservation District staff, a list of licensed contractors with rain garden construction experience, and a rebate for up to \$2,000 of construction costs. Homeowners were required to agree to maintain the rain garden for a minimum of 5 years to qualify for the program. The pilot program expired December 31, 2014.

**2017:** The City is continuing to provide technical assistance and is coordinating with Pierce Conservation District's program.

**2018:** The City will partner with the Pierce Conservation District and Tacoma School District to promote rain gardens.

### Adopt-a-Rain Garden Program

The City piloted an adopt-a-rain garden program through the end of 2014. The City provided signage to identify adopted rain gardens, trash bags, gloves, safety vests and garbage grabber tools. Volunteers removed garbage from the City-owned rain gardens; notified the City if they saw any broken structures or vandalism, dead plants, or standing water for more than 24 hours; and received a one-category rate reduction on their stormwater rate for their ongoing assistance in maintaining the City-owned rain gardens.

**2017:** The City worked on updating the program to create a permanent program.

**2018:** The City will make this a permanent program in 2018.

### Green Road Corridor Projects

The City has been designing street improvements to achieve Greenroads® Certification. A series of "Green Road Corridor" handouts and informational signage shares the benefits and special operation and maintenance considerations of these Greenroads® projects with neighboring residents. In 2014, the City approved an Ordinance for the City's roads and other transportation infrastructure in order to be models of environmental, economic, and social stewardship and by setting community goals of

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sustainable design, construction, and maintenance.

**2017:** Road construction including new roads, full reconstruction and road projects that exceed \$5 million dollars were evaluated to ensure compliance with the City’s Greenroads policy. The Greenroads policy was also taken into consideration when developing road projects through the City’s Street Initiatives program.

**2018:** New roads, full reconstruction, and road projects that exceed \$5 million will comply with the City’s Greenroads policy. Other road projects will be evaluated and Greenroads sustainability measures and Green Stormwater Infrastructure will be utilized when applicable.

### Low Impact Development Surface Water Rate Reduction

The City has implemented a Low Impact Development Surface Water Rate Reduction program. Property owners may qualify for a surface water rate reduction if they choose to utilize permanent Low Impact Development (LID) Best Management Practices (BMPs) beyond what is required per the Stormwater Management Manual (SWMM) for development or redevelopment or as a retrofit for stormwater management. Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) 12.08.560 outlines the program requirements. In order to qualify for the LID surface water rate reduction, all BMPs must be permanent LID BMPs per the SWMM, Volume 3, or Volume 6, as approved by the Environmental Services Department.

**2017:** Began promoting the updated LID Surface Water Rate Reduction program.

**2018:** Continue to promote the program and encourage property owners to utilize permanent LID solutions.

## TOOLS

**Surface Water Management website** *(Includes information about Surface Water Management services and rates, the NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit, the Surface Water Management Manual and permitting requirements, general best management practices to prevent stormwater pollution, and more.)*

Continued to update surface water pages and information as needed.

**2017:** Completed some general updates to the Surface Water Management website.

**2018:** Provide more regularly scheduled website audits and refresh content.

**Tacoma EnviroNews listserv** *(Environmental issues listserv.)*

Continued to use e-mail listserv for public to post information related to environmental issues, events, and job or volunteer opportunities.

**Social Media** *(Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube)*

Continued to post new content on City of Tacoma Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts related to stormwater education. Initiated Environmental Services targeted Facebook page in December, 2017.

**2017:** Facebook 11,707 Likes; Twitter 47,561 Followers; YouTube 740 Subscribers and 295,307 Video Views.

**2018:** Continue to utilize.

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**EnviroTalk** (Seasonal newsletter mailed to 53,000 single family and duplex homes in Tacoma to educate about surface water, wastewater and solid waste messages.)

Co-branded stormwater pollution prevention messages with PSSH campaign messages when possible.

Various surface water subjects covered include:

- Natural yard care
- Rain Gardens and porous paving
- Scoop the poop
- Make a Splash grant
- Natural cleaners
- Proper disposal of household hazardous wastes
- Water pollution hotline
- Curb marking
- Tree maintenance
- Auto maintenance
- Car washing
- Flood prevention
- EnviroHouse
- TAGRO

**2017:** Continued to educate City of Tacoma residents and customers and promote behavior change to customers in engaging ways. Continue to include surface water messages with the Puget Sound Starts Here campaign.

**2018:** Plans to convert to digital publication with translation option, when majority of customer opt-in.

**Utility Bill Inserts** (Bimonthly insert distributed to 125,000 customers.)

Various stormwater subjects include:

- Auto maintenance
- Water pollution hotline
- Flood prevention
- Pet waste Proper disposal of household hazardous wastes.

**2017:** Noticeable increase in calls on advertised topics when inserts go out.

**2018:** Continue to educate Environmental Services customers and promote general awareness and behavior change to customers in engaging ways.

**TV Tacoma** (City-run cable channel.)

Continued to work with TV Tacoma on stormwater education opportunities and features through Urban Green programming, PSA projects, SCALA pages (bulletin board style postings broadcast via Click! Cable TV), etc.

**2018:** Continue to promote stormwater messages.

**Recycle Coach Phone App**

Environmental Services phone app with tools including reminders for garbage, recycling and yard waste pick-up (text, email or phone call), street sweeping notifications, proper disposal how-to's, and more.

**2018:** Kickoff phone app.

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**EnviroHouse** (*Hands-on showcase of green building and natural landscape ideas, materials and techniques that create a healthy home. Demonstrates rain barrels, native plants, rain gardens, pervious pavement, natural yard care techniques, “pin” foundations, and other surface water-related best management practices in action.*)

Continued to publicize EnviroHouse and stormwater messaging through City communication vehicles, as well as advertising in local media.

Workshop topics include green roofs, tree planting and maintenance, pervious pavement, rain gardens, rain barrels, sustainable landscaping, composting, and more.

Distribution of PSSH Chinook Book coupon apps and Safer Cleaner kits. Will continue to refine EnviroHouse evaluation surveys and assessment tools to better define areas of success and areas of improvement.

**2017:** Over 2,200 visitors including walk-ins, 215 tour participants, and 813 workshop participants. Developed 12-15 new how-to videos and new micro-website.

**2018:** Continue to implement surface water messaging and programs.

### Regional Community Partnerships

Continue to coordinate with the following agencies and groups such as:

- Pierce Conservation District
- Chamber/Clover Creek Watershed Council
- Puyallup River Watershed Council
- Puget Sound Partnership (South Central Local Integrating Organization and Alliance for a Healthy South Sound)
- WRIA 10/12 :Lead Entity
- NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permittee Phase I Coordinators
- Stormwater Outreach for Regional Municipalities (STORM), the western Washington regional group of stormwater professionals implementing public education and outreach NPDES requirements
- Puget Sound Starts Here campaign
- Interagency inspector forums
- Puyallup Watershed Initiative Environmental Education Community of Interest (EECOI)
- South Sound Phase II NPDES Permit Coordinators Group
- Washington Stormwater Center

Center for Urban Waters interagency coordination between the City of Tacoma's Environmental Services offices, UW-Tacoma research labs and Puget Sound Partnership headquarters

### Local Community Partnerships

Working with the Pierce Conservation District Stream Team and Citizens for a Healthy Bay, which help interested Tacoma community groups organize storm drain stenciling and curb marking efforts. The Stream Team also leads other programs such as wetland and stream bank cleanups and revegetation projects, educational workshops and tours for the public.

Participate in Green Tacoma Day.

Partner with the Tacoma Rainiers baseball team through an Environmental Services Sponsorship to utilize PA announcements during the games, radio spots, and ads in “The Dirt” game program to promote stormwater and Puget Sound Starts Here messages.

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### Healthy Homes Healthy Neighborhoods Campaign

AmeriCorps volunteers coordinate door-to-door canvassing visits to provide residents with information and incentives to improve the health of their homes and their neighborhood in a variety of sustainability related topic areas including stormwater pollution prevention, natural yard care, tree planting, and others. The information offered is tailored to the interests of each homeowner. In addition to the door-to-door visits, a series of community events and workshops on topics including water efficiency, edible gardening, trees, and natural yard care have been conducted. In 2017, the program was located in the Lincoln District as part of the district revitalization initiative. In 2018, the program will be located in the Tacoma Mall neighborhood in support of the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan.

### Stewardship Activities

The City partners with a variety of organizations to help promote and encourage residents to participate in stewardship activities in our local watersheds. There are active volunteer stewardship groups at City-owned properties in Julia's Gulch and Wapato Hills being coordinated through Metro Parks Tacoma.

In shoreline areas, the City partners with Citizens for a Healthy Bay to provide water pollution reporting opportunities via the Water Pollution Hotline as well as sponsor shoreline monitoring and cleanup events and curb marking activities. EarthCorps volunteers work on City-owned restoration sites and provide restoration education in conjunction with volunteer opportunities.

In upland open space areas, Tacoma Metro Parks Chip-In program helps run volunteer activities in the City that organize site stewards and volunteer work parties to remove invasive species, garbage, improve public access (trails, entrances, fencing, signage) and plant native vegetation. Forterra helps organize the annual Green Tacoma Day event celebrating Arbor Day and creating a 1-day opportunity for hundreds of volunteers to maintain various green spaces around the City.

Pierce Conservation District coordinates the Stream Team volunteers monitoring water quality in seven creeks in Tacoma. Pierce Conservation District also coordinates volunteer "Depave" pavement removal events in overly paved areas in business districts and neighborhoods. In 2017, Environmental Services and Pierce Conservation District helped design and coordinate a large depave and planting project at Holy Rosary School.

### **Water Pollution Hotline** (*Publicize the water pollution hotline operated by Citizens for a Healthy Bay, with support from Environmental Services.*)

The City has contracted with CHB to provide a hotline for citizens to report spills and other pollution which may reach the City's stormwater system or directly impact receiving waters. Environmental Services promotes the telephone number on the City's website, in City publications, signage at eight parks and other locations in Tacoma, as well as other areas around Commencement Bay. The number is also promoted by Citizens for a Healthy Bay on their website and other materials.

**2017:** 40 calls

**2018:** Investigate options for increased promotion of the water pollution hotline and review the existing website and recommend updates.