

## **EXAMPLE: PUBLIC EDUCATION PLAN**

**Municipality:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Staff contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **1. Required Elements (outline the methods to be used to address each element)**

- a. Encourage public report of the presence of illicit discharges or improper disposal into applicant's separate storm water drainage system.**
- b. Public education on the availability, location and requirements of facilities for the disposal or drop-off of household hazardous waste, travel trailer sanitary wastes, chemicals, grass clippings, leaf litter, animal wastes, and motor vehicle fluids.**
- c. Public education regarding acceptable application and disposal of pesticides and fertilizers.**
- d. Public education concerning preferred cleaning materials and procedures for residential car washing.**
- e. Public education concerning the ultimate discharge point and potential impacts from the separate storm water drainage system serving their place of residence.**
- f. Public education concerning management of riparian lands to protect water quality.**
- g. Public education about their responsibility and stewardship in their watershed.**

Throughout the term of the permit it is anticipated that at least one, or more likely a combination, of the following public information mechanisms will be used to inform our community regarding the above Required Elements (a - f). Mechanism: community and/or solid waste authority newsletters; cable TV program or ad; brochure/flyers in public facilities, public facility displays.

To at least some degree, our community will address (g) above by promoting and supporting existing public involvement programs in our community such as the Rouge Education Project, Rouge Rescue, the Rouge Friendly Business Program, and Rouge Friendly Neighborhood Program activities such as storm drain stenciling, River Watch, River Stewards,...etc.

In addition to supporting existing area wide programs, each of the required elements (with perhaps the exception of f) will be the subject of a 1/4 - page newsletter announcement. On the month that the topic is targeted, special announcements on the municipal cable channel will be made (refer to Activity #1, Section 6 below).

Existing public education efforts and anticipated future efforts for each of the Required elements

are briefly described below.

**a. Encourage the public to report illicit discharges or improper disposal into storm sewers.**

**Existing Effort:**

Staff are investigating options for modifying our existing citizen complaint system to encourage reporting of and response to complaints of illicit discharges or improper disposal into storm sewers.

**Future Effort:**

We are aware of Wayne County Department of Environment's Illicit Connection Program as well as the County's illegal dumping/environmental hotline. Staff will be working with the County to identify ways to promote/expand these efforts in our community (coordinate these efforts with our efforts). and/or As part of our community's Illicit Discharge Elimination Plan we are establishing a complaint system for the reporting of complaints. We are also developing a strategy for informing the public about the impact illicit discharges have on the environment and to encourage reporting (refer to Activity #\_\_ Section 6, below).

**b. Education of the public on the availability, location and requirements of facilities for the disposal or drop-off of household hazardous waste, travel trailer sanitary wastes, chemicals, grass clippings, leaf litter, animal wastes, and motor vehicle fluids.**

**Existing Effort:**

Quarterly community newsletter routinely addresses the availability, etc., of these services and offers educational information regarding proper disposal and handling of many of these materials. In addition our Solid Waste Authority (or waste hauler) also distributes information regarding some of these issues.

**Future Effort:**

Our community will continue its existing efforts. Staff will also work to identify potential information gaps (e.g. travel trailer sanitary wastes) and investigate opportunities, other mechanisms, and information for better promoting the water quality benefits of properly handling and disposing of these materials. Staff will also work with our solid waste authority (or waste hauler) to better coordinate or expand and improve their educational efforts in this regard.

**c. Public education concerning application and disposal of pesticides and fertilizers.**

**Existing Effort:**

None.

**Future Effort:**

Our community is aware of the Master Composters Program as well as the Friends of the Rouge efforts in this regard. Over the term of the Permit and as watershed planning occurs staff will work with master composter organizers and FOTR, as well as others (e.g. Clean Sweep), to identify and implement opportunities, mechanisms and information for educating the public on these issues. Staff will ask Wayne County MSU Extension for fact sheets on fertilizer and pesticide application. Through municipal newsletter, we will publicize the free garden hotline service.

**d. Public education concerning materials and procedures for residential car washing.**

**Existing Effort:**

None.

**Future Effort:**

Over the term of the Permit, and as watershed planning occurs, staff will explore existing information and opportunities for educating the public regarding this issue. Recommendations from the Rouge Repair Kit, page 26, including the illustration, may be used as part of our summer newsletter article.

**e. Public education concerning the ultimate discharge point and potential impacts from storm water pollutants.**

**Existing Effort:**

None.

**Future Effort:**

See Sections 3, 4, & 6 below.

**f. Public education concerning management of riparian lands to protect water quality.**

**Existing Effort:**

None.

**Future Effort:**

Riparian land ownership in our community is minimal, therefore this is anticipated as a low educational priority. Watershed planning efforts may modify this view.

**g. Public education for citizen responsibility and stewardship.**

**Existing Effort:**

Within our community  X  schools are currently participating in the Rouge Education Project. We coordinate  X  Rouge Rescue sites each year. Storm drains have been stenciled in  X  areas by (*various*) groups.  X  groups have adopted approximately  Y  miles of river as part of the River Watch Program.  X  citizens from our community are actively volunteering to educate the public regarding responsibility and stewardship via the Friends of the Rouge River Stewards Program, the local Master Composters program, or others.

**Future Effort:**

See Sections 3, 4, & 6 below for detailed information. Our community is currently (*working, or negotiating*) with \_\_\_ (e.g. Friends of the Rouge, the county, neighbor community, or others) to....

## **2. Stakeholders, individuals, and organizations contacted in the process of preparing the Public Education Plan.**

During preparation of this Public Education Plan, staff from (Dept/Division) performed the following:

- Contacted various staff from within our community
  - our community's Parks & Recreation,
  - City Manager's Office, etc.
- Contacted various staff from outside our community
  - Friends of the Rouge
  - County Parks Department
  - Rouge Program Office
  - Neighboring community staff
- Held a focus group for teachers specifically for Activity # \_\_ described below
- Shared draft plan and received comments from ...
- Activity #\_\_ described below will be a specific effort to recruit & involve stakeholders in the Public Education Plan.

It is anticipated that the Watershed Planning Public Participation process will also be a forum for involving stakeholders in the development/modification of our community's public education plan. Revisions and input regarding the Public Education Plan are expected and welcome throughout the Watershed Plan development process.

## **3. Priority concerns to be addressed in the first year.**

Based on comments received from stakeholders we have decided initially to focus our first year public education efforts on relatively simple concepts of Watershed Awareness , Storm Water Management and Our Actions Affect the River targeted at home owners & business owners in our community. Although the Rouge River passes through our community, few people see it on a daily basis. Raising awareness about the connection of the Rouge River to our community with upstream and downstream areas that are accessible to the public will be a priority.

Educating our staff and fostering cooperation and partnerships with existing organizations, groups or agencies involved in educating the public regarding storm water management will also be a priority in this first year.

As the Watershed Planning process progresses it is expected that additional, or more specific, priorities will be identified and the Public Education Plan will be modified accordingly.

## **4. Objectives for Public Education.**

- 1) To increase the general awareness among our citizens of the Rouge River and associated tributaries as well as how their daily activities impact the resource (i.e. build awareness).
- 2) Improve the public's perception of the Rouge River's existing and future potential as a community asset, recreational and natural resource (i.e. get people excited about the resource - foster stewardship)
- 3) Develop and implement public involvement and education programs, materials and activities for the citizens in our community building awareness and fostering stewardship.

- 4) Realize increases in the number of schools, groups, or individuals from our community that are participating in existing Rouge River educational efforts (e.g. Rouge Education Project schools, Rouge Rescue volunteers & sites, stenciled areas. River Watch groups & miles of river adopted)

**5. Other organizations (outside the municipality) assisting with public education. List the organization, the program assistance and the contact person.**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Contact</b>
1. Friends of the Rouge	Stenciling	John Bingamon
2. Solid Waste Authority	Household Hazardous Waste Education, Yard	?
3. Community College/Univ. Rouge Education/Resource Center		?
4. ?	?	?

**\*Optional - Submit copy of contract, memorandum of understanding, etc., documenting program assistance.**

**6. Schedule for public education plan implementation - year 1**

*(Please note: the Activities describe below are intended to give the reader an impression of the range and variety of public education activities that could be pursued. It is **not** meant to imply that an individual community will be expected to or should even attempt to implement all of these activities. Communities are encourage to pick and choose among these examples, generate their own ideas, as well as coordinate with and/or enhance existing efforts by others in order to create a Public Education Plan that communicates information and encourages citizen action. The information and actions encouraged by the Public Education Plan should be consistent with their watershed neighbors while at the same time reflecting the unique conditions, resources, and public education mechanisms available, or in use, in their community or agency.)*

Based on comments received from stakeholders, we have decided to pursue the following public education activities in this first year.

**Activity #1:** City Newsletter series & Cable TV ads

**Target Audience:** All adults

**Messages:** All of the messages listed in 1 of this plan, plus:

- city officials encourage resident action
- schedule for area wide education and information programs (updated monthly)

**Description:** 1/4 page article with clip art targeting The Rouge River and You - different actions emphasized each month.

**Timetable:** One per month (quarterly)

**Responsibility:** Public information officer, in consultation with \_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_.

**Activity #2:** Heighten visibility & Promote school water/resource monitoring

**Target Audience:** City Council, school officials, and all residents

**Messages:** water quality has improved, but still pollutants in the water.

**Description:** Video taped presentation to City Council (and/or School Board) by students participating in the Rouge Education Project

**Timetable:** Contact with Rouge Education Project participating teachers by \_\_\_\_\_. City Council presentation by students in \_\_\_\_\_. Presentation to School Board in \_\_\_\_\_. Press releases prior to presentations.

**Responsibility:** Storm water manager

**Activity #3:** Design information display table ( Our Actions display ) for city hall & library

**Target Audience:** City hall and library users

**Messages:** Our activities affect the Rouge.

**Description:** The watershed-wide Our Actions display will be (borrowed/modified/obtain copy). Or alternatively a small table-top poster display will be created. A graphic designer will be hired to create; or a poster contest among elementary school classes will be held to create posters. Display will have holders for education flyers/brochures.

**Timetable:** completed by \_\_\_\_\_.

**Responsibility:** Recreation Department secretary

**Activity #4:** Watershed Education/Resource Center

**Target Audience:** Adults & students

**Messages:** All of the messages listed in 1 of this plan, plus:

- stewardship, involvement activities
- workshops
- meetings & training classes

**Description:** A contract will be negotiated with community college, local community and Friends of the Rouge for college facility space and public education services.

**Timetable:** negotiation underway. Target ribbon-cutting date is \_\_\_\_\_.

**Responsibility:** Mayor's Assistant

**Activity #5:** Home Owner Association Presentations

**Target Audience:** Home owner association boards & residents

**Messages:** All of the messages listed in 1 of this plan, plus:

- stewardship, involvement activities
- detention pond maintenance & responsibilities

**Description:** Slide presentation and fact sheets will be produced and presentations given to all home owner associations within our community.

**Timetable:** Presentations to begin \_\_\_\_\_.

**Responsibility:** Storm water manager

**Activity #6:** Teacher Focus Group & Classroom Presentations

**Target Audience:** Elementary Teachers & students

**Messages:** Select messages listed in 1 of this plan, plus:  
- stewardship, involvement activities

**Description:** Teachers from the elementary schools in our community will be invited to help design a classroom hands-on, interactive presentation for community staff to give.

**Timetable:** Presentation to begin \_\_\_\_\_.

**Responsibility:** Storm water manager.

**Activity #7:** Storm Drain Stenciling

**Target Audience:** Residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, youth groups & students

**Messages:** Dump no waste drains to Rouge River (pollution pathways to the river)

**Description:** Establish storm drain stenciling program that actively and systematically results in the stenciling of storm drains and the sharing of information throughout the residential neighborhoods and commercial business areas of our community.

**Timetable:** Program planning underway; pilot neighborhoods summer 1998; Strategy for city-wide stenciling complete by \_\_\_\_\_.

**Responsibility:** Department of Public Services.

**Activity # \_\_:** Tributary signage at county road & river crossings

**Target Audience:** Drivers & passengers

**Messages:** Connection to the river. You are in a Rouge River community

**Description:** Signs will be placed at roadway/river crossings identifying Rouge River and its tributaries (e.g. Tarabusi Creek tributary of Rouge River ) and/or watershed/subwatershed boundaries will be identified (e.g. Welcome to Rouge River Watershed, or Entering Tonguish Creek Watershed )

**Timetable:**

**Responsibility:**

**Activity #\_\_:** Co-sponsor Information Outreach Workshops

**Target Audience:** community residents

**Messages:** Environmentally-friendly lawn & garden care

**Description:** Working with MSU Extension, Wayne County and Friends of the Rouge, three workshops will be held throughout the first year to inform and educate residents about healthy lawn and garden principles and practices.

**Timetable:**

**Responsibility:** Public information officer

**Activity #\_\_:** Rouge Rescue: A Community Event

**Target Audience:** Rouge Rescue volunteers

**Messages:** Rouge River is a community asset. Thank you for your efforts.

**Description:** Improve coordination & heighten promotion of annual Rouge Rescue.

- celebrate the resource and show appreciation to volunteers
- provide refreshments, etc., and an opportunity to socialize to volunteers
- set up displays and provide educational materials.

**Timetable:** to be developed.

**Responsibility:** Joint effort of Parks & Recreation & Public Works.

**Activity #\_\_:** Rouge Recreational Guide

**Target Audience:** Golfers, other recreational users, residents

**Messages:** Watershed awareness, recreation opportunity locations and amenities, connection to the river

**Description:** Purchase and distribute multiple copies of the Rouge Recreational Guide being developed by the Public Education Committee of the Rouge RAP Advisory Council.

**Timetable:** Earthday, 1998

**Responsibility:** Parks & Recreation Director

**Activity #\_\_:** Interpretive signage at Recreational facilities

**Target Audience:** Recreational users (e.g. golfers, bikers, walkers, ...)

**Messages:**

**Description:**

**Timetable:**

**Responsibility:** Recreation Department

**Activity #\_\_:** Public Education Task Force

**Target Audience:** Community-minded adults

**Messages:** Help us develop a storm water public education plan that works

**Description:**

**Timetable:**

**Responsibility:**

**Activity #\_\_:** Rouge Friendly Neighborhood Program

**Target Audience:**

**Messages:**

**Description:** Staff will work with Friends of the Rouge to facilitate delivery of Rouge Friendly Neighborhood Program activities (River Watch/Adopt-a-stream, stenciling, workshops, Rouge Repair Kit outreach...) in our community neighborhoods.

**Timetable:**

**Responsibility:**

**Activity #\_\_:** Restaurant Placemats

**Target Audience:** Adults and children

**Messages:**

**Description:**

**Timetable:**

**Responsibility:**

**Activity #\_\_:** Community Clean Water Fact Sheets

**Target Audience:** Community business & home owners

**Messages:**

**Description:**

**Timetable:**

**Responsibility:**

**7. Relationship to Watershed Management Planning (if known).**

Based on initial discussions with fellow subwatershed communities, effective public education regarding storm water management will be critical and will likely be a specific goal or objective of the Watershed Management Plan. To this end, the Public Education Plan as submitted with the Permit application is recognized as simply the beginning and is therefore somewhat vague.

As experience is gained and Watershed Management progresses appropriate modifications and changes to the Public Education Plan and activities will be made.

**8. Plan for Evaluating Impacts.**

The Public Education Plan will be evaluated based on progress made towards meeting the objectives described above. We are aware of the public survey performed by the Rouge Program Office in 1993 and we anticipated that through the Watershed Planning Public Participation process we will be able to gauge our community's baseline awareness of storm water management and its perception of the Rouge River.

It is anticipated that during the Watershed Management Plan development process the need for and opportunities to evaluate the success or impact of public education plans will be discussed.

To this end our community would be willing to discuss its participation in future surveys, and/or studies, to evaluate impacts of the public education plans with our fellow subwatershed communities, the Friends of the Rouge organization as well as other organizations or agencies involved in storm water management/watershed management educational efforts.

Simple mechanisms for evaluating the success, or impact, of each of the individual public education Activities describe above will also be performed. It is anticipated that the evaluation mechanisms and results will be briefly described in the annual permit report.

In addition, tracking the participation of our community's schools, community groups, and individuals in existing Rouge River educational programs will be another method of evaluating impacts.

**9. Date for Annual Progress Report.**

Will be set upon issuance of the Certificate of Coverage by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). For planning purposes it is anticipated that the first Annual Report will be due on or about \_\_\_\_\_, 1999.