

How Are NEIWPCC, the States, and US EPA Coordinating Their NPS Management Efforts?

Since water and its contaminants do not recognize state boundaries, it makes sense for neighboring states to cooperate when seeking solutions to NPS problems. New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC), in its mission to provide leadership and to promote interstate cooperation, facilitates a Nonpoint Source (NPS) Workgroup. State NPS program coordinators from New England, New York, and New Jersey, as well as representatives from EPA Regions 1 and 2, participate in this group. The primary objective for the workgroup is to help NPS managers in the Northeast cooperate on improving state and interstate NPS pollution management.

NEIWPCC, with input from the workgroup, coordinates an annual NPS meeting each spring. This meeting is the premier northeast regional forum for sharing information and improving communication on NPS issues and projects at local, state, and regional levels. In addition, NEIWPCC hosts an annual technology transfer workshop that affords states the opportunity to share information on technologies and methods to control NPS pollution. Both of these meetings are open to anyone involved or interested in NPS management. For information on these events, visit www.neiwpcc.org/events.html.



Printed on recycled paper

For More Information, Contact:

US ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Nonpoint Source Control Branch
www.epa.gov/owow/nps/

CONNECTICUT DEP
NPS Management Program
Phone: 860/424-3025
<http://dep.state.ct.us/nps/index.htm>

MAINE DEP
Bureau of Land & Water Quality
Watershed Planning & Management
Phone: 207/287-3901
www.state.me.us/dep/blwq/

MASSACHUSETTS DEP
Phone: 617/292-5500
www.state.ma.us/dep/dephome.htm

NEW HAMPSHIRE DES
Watershed Management Bureau
Watershed Assistance Section
Phone: 603/271-2457
www.des.state.nh.us/wmb/was

NEW JERSEY DEP
Bureau of Nonpoint Pollution Control
Phone: 609/633-7021
www.state.nj.us/dep/dwq/nonpoint.htm

NEW YORK STATE DEC
Phone: 518/402-8244
www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dow/index.htm

RHODE ISLAND DEM
Office of Water Resources
Phone: 401/222-4700
www.state.ri.us/dem/programs/behavior/water/quality/index.htm

VERMONT DEC
Water Quality Division
Phone: 802/241-3770
www.vtwaterquality.org



What Do You Know About...



Nonpoint Source Pollution?



New England Interstate Water
Pollution Control Commission
Boott Mills South
100 Foot of John Street
Lowell, MA 01852

Phone: 978/323-7929 ♦ Fax: 978/323-7919
www.neiwpcc.org ♦ mail@neiwpcc.org

Did You Know...

Approximately 40% of America's surveyed lakes, rivers, and estuaries fail to meet standards for safe fishing or swimming? According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, nonpoint source (NPS) pollution constitutes the nation's largest source of water quality problems. NPS pollution causes beach closures, fish kills, habitat destruction, and unsafe drinking water. Unlike point sources (e.g., discharge pipes from facilities), nonpoint sources are diffuse. This makes them difficult to trace and control.



What Is Nonpoint Source Pollution?

NPS pollution occurs when runoff (rainwater or snowmelt) moves over the land picking up sediments and contaminants, and then deposits them into lakes, rivers, and coastal waters. Think about all the surfaces rainwater passes over on its way to the river or storm drain. There are many opportunities for it to pick up pollutants from driveways, crops, industrial sites, or malfunctioning septic systems. Additional NPS pollution can result from the rain itself as airborne contaminants get captured in precipitation, fall to earth, and flow into surface waters.

Everyone contributes to NPS pollution in one way or another. Land uses such as agriculture, forestry, construction, and septic systems are all potential sources of nonpoint contaminants. Household contributors include improperly disposed pet waste, lawn fertilizer, paints, and motor oil. Automobiles, factories, wood stoves, and power plants emit airborne contaminants that return to the earth in the form of rain or snow. The amount of these contaminants that reach water sources is increased by impermeable surfaces such as roofs and pavement, which keep the soil from naturally filtering stormwater.



What Are the Main NPS Contaminants and Their Sources?

- ◆ **Sediments** eroded from construction sites, lawns, agricultural crops, timber operations, and unstable stream banks
- ◆ **Toxic chemicals and heavy metals** leached from old manufacturing sites, introduced through atmospheric deposition, and washed from streets, parking lots, rooftops, and lawns
- ◆ **Pathogens**, including bacteria and viruses, from faulty septic systems, livestock, wildlife, and pet waste
- ◆ **Nutrients** from fertilizers, septic systems, and atmospheric deposition



What Are the Laws and Regulations?

With the 1987 amendments to the Clean Water Act, Congress established the Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program under Section 319. This program authorizes EPA to award grants to states, territories, and tribes to implement approved NPS pollution management programs. In 1990, Congress amended the Coastal Zone Management Act by adding Section 6217, which authorizes the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to award grants to states with approved coastal NPS pollution control programs. In addition, many states have their own statutory and/or regulatory authorities for NPS management.

The best way to control NPS pollution, however, is to keep contaminants from the path of runoff and out of the ground. This means that every person must take responsibility for preventing NPS pollution.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP PREVENT NPS POLLUTION?

- ◆ Avoid overusing fertilizers in your lawn care. Check the weather and do not apply prior to heavy rain.
- ◆ Limit pesticides and use natural pest control methods when possible.
- ◆ Repair or replace failing or substandard septic systems. Maintain your system, inspect it annually, and pump out the septic tank as needed, usually every 3 to 5 years.
- ◆ Wash your car at a commercial car wash that recycles wash water. If you must wash your car at home, do it in an area where runoff is contained.
- ◆ Do not dump used motor oil down a storm drain or on the ground. Recycle it at a local auto shop or at your town's Public Works Department. One quart of oil can contaminate 2 million gallons of drinking water!
- ◆ Purchase energy-efficient products for your home. Using less energy will reduce the amount of fossil fuels burned and airborne particles emitted. Cleaner air means cleaner water.
- ◆ Avoid feeding waterfowl.
- ◆ Dispose of pet waste properly in either the garbage or, if it's not mixed with litter, the toilet.
- ◆ Do not pour hazardous household products, such as paint, paint thinners, and oven cleaners, down any drain or toilet or on the ground. Instead, make use of your town's hazardous waste collection days. If your town doesn't have a collection program, call your town councilors and share this information with them.
- ◆ Use natural, environmentally-friendly alternatives in place of hazardous cleaners and other toxic household products. If such alternatives are not available, choose less toxic products and use the minimum amount necessary.
- ◆ Reduce the volume of runoff leaving your property by minimizing paved surfaces, collecting runoff from your roof in rain barrels for reuse, and landscaping with native plants. Maintaining vegetative buffers around your property will promote water infiltration and pollutant settling.