

Athens-Clarke County STORMWATER NEWS

August 2021

Celebrating National Water Quality Month

Water is one of the most valuable resources for people who live, work, attend school, and visit our wonderful city of Athens, GA. Did you know that August is [National Water Quality Month](#)? It might surprise you that the water quality here in Athens could use some improvement. Approximately 70 miles of streams and rivers are considered polluted by state standards. Most of these streams have elevated levels of fecal coliform bacteria, which comes from human and animal waste. Other impairments include low fish/insect diversity and abnormal pH levels.



What better time to refresh ourselves on ways to protect and preserve our water resources? Here are some small things you can do to help prevent water pollution:

1. Pick up after your pets! Animal waste contains bacteria that is harmful to water quality.
2. Plant native trees and plants in your yard which encourage infiltration and provide valuable habitat for animals and insects.
3. Install a rain barrel to capture rainwater from your roof.
4. Use a mulching blade when cutting your grass. This allows your lawn to act more like a sponge and can also help sequester carbon from the atmosphere.
5. Properly dispose of any leaf and limb debris by bagging it for pick-up, taking it to the ACC Landfill, or adding it to a contained compost pile away from water. Do not dump this debris into the street, as it can clog storm drains.
6. Don't litter! Roadside trash often washes directly into storm drains which lead to streams without any treatment.
7. Avoid cutting down trees near water. Tree roots hold stream banks in place, prevent erosion, and provide shade to the water to keep it from heating up in the sun.
8. Follow directions carefully when applying fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides. They are very likely to end up in our waterways; if not

immediately, then with the next rain. Avoid using these completely within a stream buffer.

Visit [www.accgov.com/stormwater](http://accgov.com/stormwater) [<http://accgov.com/stormwater>] to learn about more ways to protect our water quality. We all play a part in preserving the health and integrity of our environment.

Stormwater Advisory Committee Underway

A new Stormwater Advisory Committee was recently formed to review the stormwater level of service and associated funding levels in Athens-Clarke County, and recommend any modifications that would serve the ideal public interest. Members were appointed by Athens-Clarke County Mayor Kelly Girtz and represent a variety of interests/industries, including engineering, construction, water quality, environmental policy, and residential homeowners. The committee has held two meetings virtually. Meetings are open to the public, and dates are advertised on Stormwater's [online calendar](#). The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 1 at 12:00 PM.

More information related to the Stormwater Advisory Committee - including meeting agendas, minutes, YouTube links to recordings of the meetings, and background information - can be found on the [Committee's webpage](#). Public comments are also welcome and encouraged as the committee moves forward.

Stormwater Advisory Committee Agendas, Minutes, and Video Links



Public Comment Form

Volunteers Wanted for 2021 Athens Water Festival



The [2021 Athens Water Festival](http://www.athenswaterfestival.com) [<http://www.athenswaterfestival.com>] is right around the corner and we are in need of volunteers! The Athens Water Festival is an annual family event celebrating all things water. Attendees splash, play, and learn with hands-on water activities set-up in a Festival format. This year's theme is "Athens Water Olympics."

Volunteers will assist with event set-up and breakdown, man various stations, and facilitate water activities for attendees. The Festival will take place on Saturday, September 11 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, and we have two shifts available: a morning shift from 9:30 AM to 12:15 PM, and an afternoon shift from 11:45 AM to 2:30 PM. All volunteers will receive a t-shirt and food voucher during their shift. We do ask that volunteers under the age of 15 are accompanied by a parent or teacher.

Read through the various volunteer descriptions and register for your selected role/shift on our [GivePulse page](https://www.givepulse.com/group/119438-Athens-Clarke-County-Stormwater) [<https://www.givepulse.com/group/119438-Athens-Clarke-County-Stormwater>], and email stormwater@accgov.com with any questions.

Call for Photos



It's almost time to start putting together the 5th edition of our Stormwater Calendar, and we are looking for photos of water or nature scenes around Athens. To submit a photo to be considered for the 2022 Calendar, email the image to stormwater@accgov.com with the name of the photographer and a description of when, where, and why it was taken. It could end up

featured!

Upcoming Events

Green Thumb Lecture Series: Fall Vegetable Gardening
Wednesday, August 11, 6:00 - 7:30 PM
Online via Zoom

Join Athens-Clarke County Extension online for a free, educational webinar about fall vegetable gardening. Gardeners of all experience levels are welcome. Register by August 10 at www.accgov.com/gardening [<http://www.accgov.com/gardening>] to be emailed the Zoom link.

Zoo Day 2021
Saturday, August 28, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Bear Hollow Zoo at Memorial Park (293 Gran Ellen Drive)

Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services will host Zoo Day 2021 on Saturday, August 28 at Bear Hollow Zoo at Memorial Park. The theme is "Guardians of the Zoo-niverse" and participants will experience a fun filled day of craft stations, educational animal encounters, and special guests. The fee for this event is \$2 per person for Athens-Clarke County residents and \$3 per person for non-residents. Children under the age of 2 are admitted free of charge. For more information about the zoo, call 706-613-3580 or visit www.accgov.com/bearhollow [<http://www.accgov.com/bearhollow>].

Stormwater Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, September 1, 12:00 PM
Online (via WebEx)

September meeting of the Stormwater Advisory Committee. Agenda and streaming information will be posted later this month at www.accgov.com/agendacenter [<http://www.accgov.com/agendacenter>].

2021 Athens Water Festival
Saturday, September 11, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Sandy Creek Park (400 Bob Holman Rd.)

Go for the Gold with Team Water during the 2021 Athens Water Festival! With open-ended Water Olympics themed activities, participants of all ages will enjoy activities at the festival. Compete in fun water games, kayak on Lake Chapman, meet live animals, splash around with water trucks, and more! Make sure to bring a bathing suit and water bottle. Festival activities are free, but park admission is \$2 per person (ages 4-64). Visit www.athenswaterfestival.com [<http://www.athenswaterfestival.com>] for more information.

Contact Us


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Notice Dumping?

Call the Stormwater Hotline at 706-614-1282 if you see someone dumping into a storm drain or notice flooding due to clogged pipes.

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