



# ROANOKE COUNTY

## DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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BUILDING PERMITS / INSPECTIONS  
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW  
ENGINEERING

Tarek Moneir  
DIRECTOR

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT  
STORM DRAINAGE  
GIS/MAPPING

## Storm Drain Stenciling Program

### What is the Storm Drain Stenciling Program?

Roanoke County's Storm Drain Stenciling Program is a litter education and cleanup campaign designed to encourage citizen-based stewardship of the County's water resources. Citizens who stencil storm drain inlets may choose from several designs, one of which is shown below:



### Why Stencil Storm Drain Inlets?

Many citizens do not understand the connection between storm drain inlets, stormwater, and local streams, rivers, and lakes. Citizens mistakenly believe that storm drainage systems carry stormwater to a treatment plant prior to it being discharged into the nearest waterway. However, stormwater is NOT treated, and it discharges directly into the area's receiving waters. Often, stormwater is polluted with oil, sediment, trash, lawn and leaf debris, pet waste, and more.

Stenciling storm drain inlets is an easy way to provide a visual reminder that stormwater goes, untreated, to nearby waterways. And, it is a direct and cost-effective project to remind people not to dump ANYTHING into the drainage system.

Volunteer storm drain stenciling projects offer an educational pollution prevention activity with a lasting effect. Storm drain stenciling is a practical, positive, easy first step toward public education, involvement, and support. Stenciled storm drains help raise citizen awareness and educate the public about stormwater runoff and nonpoint source pollution. Stencils tell people not to dump and why.

## **Who Should Participate?**

Storm drain stenciling projects can be a tool for:

- Educators - as a service learning project, students can stencil storm drains located on school property
- Girl and Boy Scouts - earn a conservation badge by stenciling neighborhood storm drains
- Local Governments - stenciling storm drains helps localities, like Roanoke County, meet some of the permit requirements for public stormwater education and outreach under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit
- Business and Industry - show your commitment to water quality in the community
- Conservation Organizations - stencil storm drains to help protect Virginia's natural resources and reduce nonpoint source pollution
- Neighborhood Associations and Churches - stencil storm drains as a cost-effective, community-based service project to protect water quality

## **How Should a Stenciling Project Be Organized/Conducted?**

1. Determine the area and size of your project: How many volunteers will be helping and how many drains will you stencil? It takes approximately 15 minutes to stencil one storm drain inlet.
2. Secure permission from Roanoke County (call the Stormwater Program Manager at 540-772-2036). Depending on the selected location, the Virginia Department of Transportation may also have to be notified.
3. Involve your neighbors.
4. Recruit volunteers.
5. Collect project supplies: Roanoke County, Department of Development Services will provide a storm drain stenciling kit, which includes a Mylar stencil, non-toxic paint, a whisk broom, work gloves, safety vests, and trash bags. Call the Stormwater Program Manager at 540-772-2036 to obtain these supplies. The County can also provide a map of the drainage system so that you can mark off which inlets you stencil. The County collects this data for its Geographic Information System (GIS) and for annual reporting related to MS4 Permit compliance.
6. Prepare work site: The pavement should be dry and warm (avoid rainy and/or windy days). Use the broom to sweep dirt/debris away from stencil area. Place the stencil on

the inlet where the message will be most visible (i.e., avoid areas where dirt and leaves will collect and cover the message).

7. Stencil: Spray the paint over the message. Note that two light coats are better than one thick coat that may puddle around the letters. Also, be careful of drifting paint, especially near parked vehicles! Stenciled messages will last for approximately two years on a paved/concrete surface.
8. Clean up: Collect the supplies and dispose/recycle any collected debris.
9. Return the stencils and any leftover products to the County's Stormwater Program Manager.

#### **Any Tips or Suggestions?**

- Work in groups of two or more
- Be conscious of the weather forecast - schedule a rain date, if necessary
- Mark work areas with "wet paint" signs
- Consider stenciling public places such as libraries and schools
- Keep all involved parties informed at all times; remember "knowledge is power" and "unity is strength"
- Store your materials away from the storm drain inlet openings
- Paint is relatively permanent, so pay attention to wind drift

#### **Are Storm Drain Stenciling Projects Educational?**

Volunteers will learn about:

- Types of nonpoint source pollution and ways to prevent it
- The connection between land use, stormwater runoff, and water quality



Only Rain Down the Drain

## Storm Drain Stenciling Program APPLICATION

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### Please Volunteer Today!

YES, I am interested in stenciling storm drains in my community!

How many people will be in your group? \_\_\_\_\_

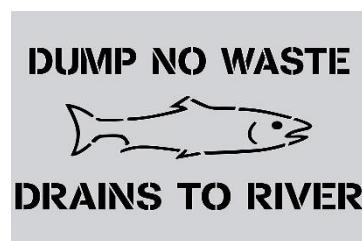
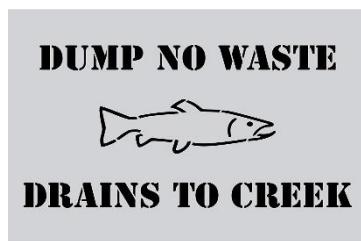
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer the following stencil:



#### **Please Return Application to:**

Cynthia S. Linkenhoker, MPA  
Stormwater Program Manager  
Roanoke County  
5204 Bernard Drive, 2nd Floor  
P.O. Box 29800  
Roanoke, VA 24018  
540-772-2036  
540-682-4618 (mobile)