Thank you for reading this edition of the *Changing Tides*, the Lowcountry Stormwater Partners (LSP) consortium E-newsletter!

*We hope that you will help protect our local waterways and share this newsletter with others!*

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**Be A Scooper Hero and Pick Up After Your Pet!**

BE PREPARED. ALWAYS BRING A BAG!
and Fido may be having a larger impact on the environment than you realize. When pet owners do not pick up their pet's waste, it can contribute to bacteria pollution.

Bacteria is the most frequently listed impairment in South Carolina waterways, threatening recreational, drinking, tourism, and shellfish harvesting uses. On average, pet waste contains over 2.5 times the bacteria that human waste does. Pet waste can also carry parasites and viruses. Common pathogens present in pet waste include *Samonella, E. coli, Giardia, and Toxoplasma*.

Bacteria from pet waste is not a small-scale problem either. The average sized dog produces 0.42 pounds of waste per day. According the the American Veterinary Medical Association, 38.4% of all households own dogs. They also estimate that the average number of dogs per household is 1.6. If we combine that data with the newest census data that states there are 70,607 households in Beaufort County, we can therefore estimate that there are 43,380 dogs in Beaufort County. All those dogs combined produce 18,220 pounds of waste a day. That is over 9 tons of fecal material deposited every single day in Beaufort County.

Pathogens and bacteria from pet waste can enter our waterways through stormwater runoff. Runoff is created when rain hits impervious surfaces like sidewalks, roadways, and rooftops. Rainwater cannot penetrate these surfaces, so it moves across them and then into storm drains and ditches. Stormwater runoff becomes polluted when it flows over pollutants that have been left on the ground. All stormwater is untreated, so all pollution left on land can ultimately end up in our creeks and rivers.

So what can we do about this issue? The good news is that there are many ways to prevent bacteria pollution from pet waste! You can:

- Be prepared. Always bring a bag!
- Clean up after your pet every single time. That includes both on walks and in the yard.
- Dispose of pet waste properly. Put it in the trash or flush it down the toilet.
- Carry extra bags with you to share with other pet owners and for when you travel with your pet.
- Tell your friends about this issue! Encourage them to be scooper heros.
Coming In With The Tide: Upcoming Events

Master Rain Gardener Course: Sign Up Soon!

Registration is now open for Clemson Extension’s 2020 Master Rain Gardener course offering. Early bird discount concludes February 14th and registration closes March 6.

This course focuses on rain garden and rainwater harvesting system design and installation. Rain gardens and rainwater harvesting systems assist residents with flood and erosion management, water conservation and establishment of backyard habitat.

As part of the Master Rain Gardener program, participants will learn about:

- Rain garden site assessment
- Soil analysis
- Design standards and elements
- Plant selection
- Maintenance and more

Participants will also spend time learning about rainwater harvesting system sizing, component considerations, water use and safety measures. The program includes four weeks of online learning modules with hands-on learning exercises. Master Rain Gardener course offers a Letter of Completion Track.
and other home gardener audiences, and a Certification Track (online classroom, field session and exam) geared towards professional audiences including landscape architects, designers, contractors, installers, etc. Residential audiences wishing to participate in the field day are welcome to sign up for the Certification Track. *The field day will take place April 15th in the Charleston, SC area.

Please visit clemson.edu/raingarden for more information including a list of Certified Master Rain Gardeners, and register HERE. Questions can be directed to Kim Morganello, Water Resources Extension Agent at kcounts@clemson.edu.

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Master Pond Manager Course: Sign up today!

The next offering of the Master Pond Manager course will begin March 19, 2020. This Clemson Extension program provides management strategies to stormwater and recreational pond owners and managers through an online classroom and hands-on field training. Participants can complete the full Master Pond Manager recognition training, or complete a Letter of Completion in Recreational or Stormwater Pond Management. Participants in the full Master Pond Manager course will receive three Category 5 pesticide CEC hours. Read our latest newsletter to watch a quick video on the MPM class experience.

Course content includes:

- Recreational Pond Design and Construction
- Stormwater Pond Design, Inspection and Maintenance
- Limnology and Water Quality
Best Management Practices for Stormwater Ponds

Fish Management

The Spring 2020 course will host field days in the Charleston, SC area. See attached syllabus for more information. All are invited to attend.

Registration ends March 13th! Visit www.clemson.edu/mpm for more information and to register.

LSP Consortium Meeting
Join us at Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority's community room (6 Snake Rd, Okatie)! The meeting will take place on March 24th, 2020 from 1:30pm until 4:00pm.

See your upcoming event in a future edition of the Changing Tides! Send your event details to Ellen Sturup Comeau at ecomeau@clemson.edu!

Going Out With The Tide: Recent Events

Evergreen Regional Water Quality Retention Basin Project Public Meeting

The Beaufort County Stormwater Department held a public meeting to discuss the Evergreen Regional Water Quality Retention Basin Project located in Okatie. The meeting was on Friday, February 14th from 10:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m., at Palmetto Electric, 1 Cooperative Way, Hardeeville.
project but also how to be active stewards in further protecting water quality. The health of local waterways impacts the fishing and oyster industries that are so vital to our economy and the quality of life for all wildlife and humans here in the Lowcountry.

The proposed project will improve water quality and reduce bacteria loads in the Okatie River. The project's construction is partially funded by a grant the County received from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control Nonpoint Source 319 Grant with funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

For more information, call the Beaufort County Stormwater Department at 843-255-2805.

Cultivating a Carolina Yard OLLI Course

This four session course, taught by Water Resources Agent Ellen Sturup Comeau, took place on January 30th, February 6th, February 13th, and February 20th at the USCB Hilton Head Island Campus. The course helped over 25 residents learn simple and effective gardening methods to create a low maintenance, watershed friendly yard that works with nature rather than against it! Session one covered maintaining healthy soil, being wise when you
mulch matters, and watering wisely. Session three covered managing yard pests responsibly, removing invasives, and using rain as a resource. Finally, session four covered garden planning, gardening with native plants, and providing for wildlife.

See your success stories in a future edition of the Changing Tides! Send your a short description and pictures to Ellen Sturup Comeau at ecomeau@clemson.edu!

Get Involved!
Becoming a volunteer!
The LSP are looking for motivated groups and individuals of all ages and abilities! For current volunteer opportunities, see our [website](#).

Attending a training or workshop!
As part of Clemson Extension's Carolina Clear program, the LSP consortium leads, partners on, and supports a variety of programs throughout the year. You can find a list of a few of our programs [HERE](#)! For current offerings, check our [events calendar](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#).

Using our educational resources!
We have a variety of resources on stormwater management, pollution prevention, and other water quality topics available on our [website](#).

Stay in Touch!
To keep up-to-date with the latest Lowcountry Stormwater Partners activities, be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), check the [events calendar](#) on our [website](#), and look for the next edition of the *Changing Tides* newsletter!

Our Partners
Have any questions, comments, or requests? Contact:
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