

## Keep Kitchen Grease Out of Sink Drains and Protect Our Creeks!



Never, ever pour any **GREASE, FAT** or **OIL** down any drain or kitchen garbage disposal. It eventually solidifies and clogs your pipes, causing costly plumbing repairs. Plus, further down the line it causes sewer back-ups and overflows that threaten the environment.

Because many sanitary sewer pipelines run next to creeks, overflowing sewage often winds up in our streams and lakes.

**DO NOT** dispose of cooking grease or other oils down the drain.

- **POUR** the grease or oil into a container, freeze it and throw it in the trash.
- **MIX** grease with kitty-litter or coffee grounds and then throw it in the trash.
- **RECYCLE** grease or frying oil from a turkey fryer. Never pour it into a sink, storm drain or creek.

### Mecklenburg County Full-Service Recycling Centers:

- 1) North Mecklenburg Recycling Center and Yard Waste  
12300 N. Statesville Road
- 2) West Mecklenburg Recycling Center  
8440 Byrum Drive
- 3) Hickory Grove Recycling Center and Yard Waste  
8007 Pence Road
- 4) Foxhole Recycling Center and Yard Waste  
17131 Lancaster Highway

# STORM WATER WATCH

Spring 2011

## Floodplain Maps Get Updated

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services continues to update floodplain maps. This process may take several years. So far, draft floodplain maps have been completed for the central, southern and southeastern sections of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. Federal review and local approval of the maps for these watersheds is expected to be completed in 2012.

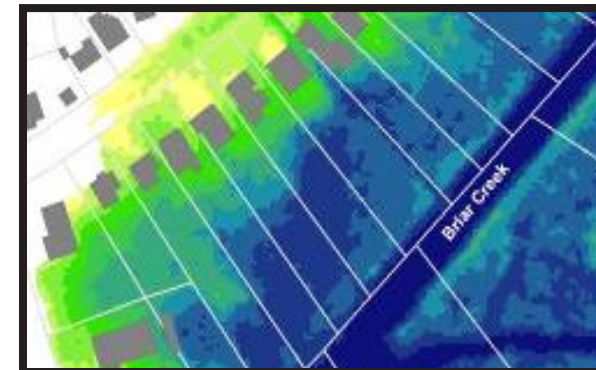
Public meetings will be held for southeastern watersheds in May and June to discuss the draft floodplain maps. New floodplain maps for western and northeastern sections of Charlotte-Mecklenburg are to be completed by 2015.

Flood risks change because of

- Development
- Population changes
- Local projects to manage storm water.

Mapping technology has improved since the last maps were drawn ten years ago. Those advancements allow Storm Water Services to more accurately predict where floodwater is likely to flow. The new maps will also calculate how deep floodwater is likely to get.

For more information, go to <http://stormwater.charmeck.org>. Click on *Drainage & Flooding*, then *Updating Floodplain Maps*.



## Dog Waste Is Raw Sewage

*Scoop it, bag it and place it in the trash.*

Mecklenburg County is home to more than 218,000 dogs. They produce over 72,000 pounds of dog waste every day.

Roundworms, *E. coli*, and *Giardia* are just a few of the many harmful microorganisms that can be transmitted from pet waste to humans. Some can last in your yard for as long as four years if not cleaned up. Children who play outside and adults who garden are at greatest risk of infection.



Pet waste is one of the causes of bacterial contamination of streams in Mecklenburg County. The solution is safe and easy.

- 1) Scoop the poop.
- 2) Put it in a plastic bag.
- 3) Place it in the trash.
- 4) Wash your hands.

We want to reduce our waste stream to landfills whenever possible. Currently, there is no better alternative for disposing of pet waste.

At some point in the future, commercial composting technology may be sufficient to treat pet waste, enabling curbside pickup along with yard waste. Until then, land filling is the best alternative for pet waste.

For more information, visit <http://stormwater.charmeck.org>.

*To report pollution or drainage problems, call 3-1-1.*



Charlotte-Mecklenburg  
**water  
watchers**

**Be a Water Watcher  
Report Pollution of our  
Lakes and Creeks**

Call 311 if you see:

- Discolored or foul-smelling creeks or lakes
- Improper dumping of used oil, paint and other pollutants
- Mud coming from construction sites
- Poor business practices that cause pollution
- Sewage coming out of manholes or pipes

Visit Water Watchers on Facebook.



**What is storm water?**

Rain or even water from a garden hose that is not absorbed into the ground becomes storm water. It is not treated at a plant and flows directly into storm drains emptying into our creeks and lakes.

**Best Management Practices Reduce Pollution  
Naturally and Effectively in our Streams, Ponds and Lakes**

Best Management Practices (BMPs) do more than improve water quality. They temporarily hold storm water and release it at a slower rate into storm drains, streams, ponds and lakes. This reduces erosion and the danger of flooding.

A storm water BMP can be something we do like cleaning up oil or paint spills on our driveways, scooping the pet's poop or not using too much fertilizer or pesticides on our lawns.

Wetlands and rain gardens are considered structural BMPs or nature's water treatment facilities.

Wetlands store floodwater,

maintain surface water flow during dry periods and filter many of the pollutants through plants and soil. Wetlands are usually a natural occurrence, but can also be man-made.

Rain gardens are bowl shaped gardens near homes or businesses designed to absorb storm water runoff from impervious surfaces such as roofs and parking lots. Like wetlands, the plants in rain gardens remove many of the common pollutants in storm water.

Look for a rain garden next time you are driving around town.



*A sand filter is another type of structural BMP. This one installed at fire station #39 prevents pollutants from entering nearby streams.*

**Rain Barrels Help Conserve Water**

Did you know a one inch rainfall over a 1,000 square foot roof provides more than 620 gallons of water? Rain barrels stop excessive water from entering our storm drains and over taxing our water treatment systems.

Rain barrels are also an easy way for homeowners to help protect our streams and lakes in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. Not only are rain barrels ecologically friendly, they are pocket-friendly too. Rain barrels provide you a free source of chemical-free water for your lawn and garden, reducing your need for treated water.

To purchase a rain barrel, call the Soil & Water Conservation District office between 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. at 704- 336-2455. For more information, visit [www.mecklenburgconservation.com](http://www.mecklenburgconservation.com).



*60 gallon rain barrel for \$95.*

**Mark Your Calendar for 2011 Events**

**Big Sweep is October 1**



Big Sweep 2010 removed 16,670 pounds of trash from Charlotte-Mecklenburg creeks and lakes.

**Creek ReLeaf is November 19**



Volunteers have planted more than 2,500 trees in the past two years in the McDowell Creek watershed.

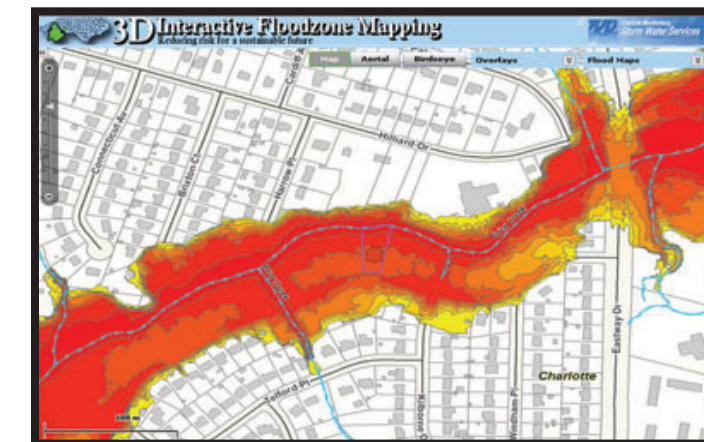
To volunteer or for more information, visit <http://stormwater.charmeck.org> or contact Erin Oliverio at 704-336-5595 or [erin.oliverio@mecklenburgcountync.gov](mailto:erin.oliverio@mecklenburgcountync.gov).

**3D Interactive Floodzone Map  
Helps Residents Understand Their Flood Risk**

As Charlotte-Mecklenburg's floodplain maps are updated, a new tool has been created to help residents understand their individual flood risk. It's called the 3D Interactive Floodzone Map. It shows the regulated floodplain, which is important for both flood insurance requirements and floodplain development regulations.

In addition, the 3D Interactive Floodzone Map shows

- expected depth of floodwater
- annual chance of flooding



Knowing that you are in a regulated floodplain is not enough information. You need to know how often your property is likely to flood, and how deep the water is expected to be. The

3D Floodzone Map uses color-coding to give that information and more. So far, 3D maps with color-coding to show each property's unique risk are only available for Briar and Little Sugar watersheds. More sections of Charlotte-Mecklenburg will be added to the map in coming months. For more information visit, <http://stormwater.charmeck.org> and click on **3D Floodzone Maps**.