

THE STORMWATER ADVOCATE

SPRING EDITION

MONTGOMERY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

APRIL 29, 2026

WELCOME BACK TO THE STORMWATER ADVOCATE!

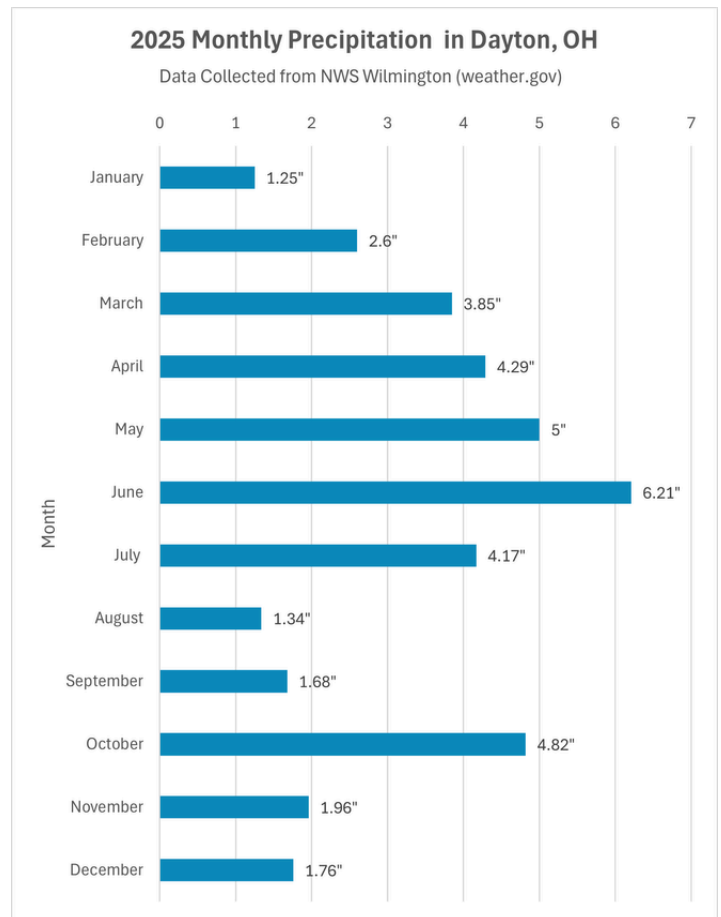
Thank you for taking the time to read our second edition of The Stormwater Advocate! In this edition of the newsletter, we will talk about how Spring has an impact on stormwater. Our goal is to continue to inform the people of Montgomery County about these relevant topics, and help show you how to play a role in improving water quality.

Spring increases both the volume and concentration of pollution in stormwater runoff, making it one of the most challenging seasons for water management. Heavier and more frequent rainfall leads to an increase in runoff. While less plant coverage allows the runoff to flow into storm drains without being filtered. This means that any pollutant can access water sources, having a negative impact on aquatic ecosystems and polluting your drinking water. That is why spring is a particularly important time to focus on water quality.

FUN FACT

THE FIRST BIG RAINSTORM OF SPRING CARRIES THE MOST POLLUTION

This is called the "first flush" effect. Throughout the winter season, contaminants like salt, oil, and debris build up on the streets and sidewalks. When the combination of snowmelt and a big rain hit, a concentrated burst of that buildup goes straight into drains and nearby waterways.



TIPS FOR REDUCING POLLUTION IN STORMWATER

How to make a difference during this spring season

Avoid applying fertilizer before rain

Any chemicals you use on your lawn can wash off during a rainstorm and runoff into a creek or storm sewer.

Bag leaves and grass clippings

With mowing starting back up, proper clean up will ensure yard waste won't clog drains and pollute the stormwater.

Pick up pet waste regularly

Pet waste is a commonly overlooked pollutant that adds excess nutrients to the water. Proper disposal can go a long way in keeping stormwater clean.

Washing vehicles

If you wash vehicles at home, make sure to wash in the grass. Your yard can absorb the runoff and filter pollutants out of the water.

TURNING RAIN INTO A RESOURCE

Rain Barrel

As spring brings more frequent rainfall, many homeowners look for simple ways to utilize the extra water around their homes. **Look no further than a rain barrel!**

A rain barrel is a collection system that hooks into your downspouts and stores some of the rainwater so that you can use it when you need it. Installing a rain barrel will also help lessen the runoff that could cause erosion or carry harmful pollutants to waterways.

Using water from a rain barrel comes with many perks such as lowering your water bill or decreasing demand for filtered and treated water. Plants benefit more from the soft rainwater, and you can do things like wash your car or windows without having to worry about spotting. All while helping the environment!

Visit www.montgomeryswcd.org to order a rain barrel today!



Rain Garden

A rain garden is another way to help prevent stormwater pollution. Rain gardens are shallow depressions in a yard that receive and absorb runoff. The garden is planted with dense vegetation, like ornamental or native plants, that can tolerate periods of wetness. Some species like Swamp Milkweed thrive in nutrient rich environments, filtering out nitrogen and phosphorus fertilizers.

The rain garden should have a porous base, and is not meant to hold water except for brief periods during a rainfall. If it holds water for too long it may overflow. Rain gardens may be established in yards or along curbs to intercept runoff. They are excellent in reducing the amount of pollution that is entering storm drains and preventing possible flooding.



SEE SOMETHING? SAY SOMETHING!

Here are some contacts you can call when you have a stormwater related issue.

Storm sewer flooding the street?

- Call your City's service department. The system may be clogged.

Not sure how to properly dispose of something?

- Call Montgomery County Solid Waste (937) 225-4999

Need to report a spill or environmental emergency?

- Call EPA's [emergency](http://www.epa.gov/emergency) hotline 1-800-282-9378

Not sure who to call?

- Call Montgomery SWCD 937-854-7645. We will steer you in the right direction!

GO WITH THE FLOW: A STORMWATER CROSSWORD

Follow the clues below to help fill out the puzzle.
The answers are below upside down and in yellow.

ACROSS

3. Item that collects rainwater from your downspout

6. A big rainstorm that carries the most pollution

DOWN

1. Chemicals used on lawns that can wash into stormwater

2. What benefits most from soft rainwater

4. Water that flows over land after rain or snowmelt

5. Pipes that rainwater from roofs flows through

1. FERTILIZER 4. RUNOFF
2. PLANTS 5. DOWNSPOUT
3. BARREL 6. FIRSTFLUSH