

TOWN OF DRYDEN
STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT

May 24th, 2004

SPDES Number: **NYR20A231**
Reporting Period from March 10, 2003 to March 10, 2004

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What is Stormwater and Why Does it Matter? Stormwater refers to water that runs across the landscape after rainstorms and eventually winds up in local streams and lakes. It often carries pollutants, such as excess sediment, salt, nutrients, pesticides, oils, heavy metals, and bacteria. These pollutants come from various sources and activities across the landscape. While it is difficult to pin-point exactly where the pollutants come from, this kind of “non-point-source pollution” can be reduced when people who live and work in the watershed make an effort to take a few specific actions, and to make some specific changes to current practices. When the pollutants end up in local water bodies they can impair water quality for human use and harm aquatic organisms. Moreover, when increased impervious surfaces in the landscape lead to a greater volume of stormwater runoff, this can cause increased erosion, flooding, and damage to aquatic habitat.

Executive Summary

Under the Phase II Stormwater Regulations mandated by the Clean Water Act and recently initiated at the Federal level by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has required the Town of Dryden to develop and implement a five year Storm Water Management Plan beginning on March 10, 2003 and continuing through January 8, 2008.

DEC also requires the Town to submit an Annual Report on its Storm Water Management Plan by June 1st of each year. In addition, a Draft Report must be shared for public comment prior to submission of the Final Report. A draft of this document was made available for public review beginning May 4th, 2004. On May 13th, 2004 the Town of Dryden held a public information meeting at 7:45PM in the Town Hall as an opportunity for all interested members of the public to hear a brief presentation on the Draft Report and to share their comments. The comments received have been incorporated into this Final Report.

The format of this report has been specified by DEC to cover six “minimum control measures” which are: public education and outreach, public involvement / participation, illicit discharge detection and elimination, construction site stormwater runoff control, post-construction stormwater management, and pollution prevention / good housekeeping for municipal operations.

The Town of Dryden is specifically required to develop a Storm Water Management Plan because it contains an area known as a “Small MS4”, which refers to *Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System* and relates to the density of population in part of the Town. Several municipalities in Tompkins County have been designated as MS4 communities due to their inclusion of sections of the Ithaca-Tompkins County Urbanized Area (map on page 2). Though the MS4 area in the Town of Dryden covers a relatively small portion of the Town’s area, Dryden has decided to apply all minimum control measures except for *illicit discharge detection and*

elimination across the whole town area because these practices provide long term benefits in terms of water quality and quantity, infrastructure longevity, and ecosystem health.

In the first year of its Stormwater Management Plan, the Town of Dryden has initiated and in many cases completed nearly all of the activities identified for year 1. Hiring an Environmental Planner was listed as a key goal for each of the six minimum measures and this was accomplished as of October, 2003. As makes sense for the first year of a five year program, many of the activities for year 1 included gathering and developing resource materials, training staff members, promoting general public awareness of stormwater issues and the new regulations, initiating and strengthening partnerships, developing opportunities for public involvement, and exploring best management practices. At this early stage, none of the management practices have been fully implemented.

In addition to continuation of activities initiated in year 1, new activities for next year will be more focused. With the assistance of the Genesee / Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council and their "Local Laws Project" the second year will be a time for development of required ordinances. The Town hopes to have drafts for all required ordinances by the end of year 2, and to have processes underway for adoption of these ordinances. Other year 2 efforts include more targeted public outreach about specific topics, such as septic system maintenance, post-construction stormwater management, and lawn care. Now that the Environmental Planner has gathered resources and materials for public outreach, presentations for community groups and specific stakeholder groups such as auto repair shop owners, Town highway department staff, and MS4 area residents and establishments will be organized. Some resources developed in year 1, such as a basic webpage and the library of printed resources, will be improved for better public access. Other activities initiated in year 1, such as the new Sixmile Creek Watershed Volunteer Monitoring Program, will really get under way in year 2.

There are no significant changes to the overall program, though a few projects which depend on assistance from others or external funding have been delayed in order to take advantage of collaborations. For example, collaborative outfall mapping will begin as soon as additional funding is received. There are no changes in the MS4 area, though as mentioned above, the Town of Dryden will be applying most Storm Water Management Activities across the whole Town area.

Stormwater Management in Tompkins County has been an extremely collaborative process. The County Stormwater Working Group was formed in February of 2003, and the list of participants is attached as Appendix A. With the Soil and Water Conservation District, the Tompkins County Planning Department, the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and multiple municipalities involved, this group has access to many resources. There is no formal legally binding agreement for the collaboration, but it has been extremely helpful. The Town of Dryden and the other MS4s could never have accomplished alone what this group has achieved as a whole. After one year of working together and developing a workplan, the Stormwater Working Group is ready to move forward on specific action items, as identified in the tables below.

In addition, the Town of Dryden has developed a mutually beneficial partnership with the neighboring Town of Caroline. Starting April 1st, 2004, Dryden's recently hired Environmental Planner has been assisting the Town of Caroline with Stormwater Management activities. In return, Caroline is funding a portion of the Environmental Planner's salary, and has shared all of Caroline's Stormwater work to-date with the Environmental Planner. The formal agreement between Dryden and Caroline is attached as Appendix B.

Several municipalities are working together with the Tompkins County Planning Department on a Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, which includes a Flood Hazard Mitigation Program and has components specific to stormwater management. Though Dryden has not been a part of this process to date (because Dryden developed a Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2000), the Town will become more involved in year 2 as the plan is finalized and the County works on coordinating local Hazard Mitigation activities. Dryden will also benefit from the Fall Creek Watershed Assessment planned for next year as part of the County's Flood Hazard Mitigation Program.

Dryden is involved in multiple watershed organizations at multiple scales, as described in the section below on "watershed organizations" (under Public Participation). As shown in the tables below, there are too many collaborative efforts to list them comprehensively here. If desired, please contact us for additional details on any of the collaborations described below.

The subsequent sections follow the format specified by DEC for reporting on accomplishments and plans for next year for each of the six minimum measures, in table format.