

Regional Update

A Monthly Report of Activities on the Eastern Shore of Virginia



September 2007

Occohannock TMDL Implementation Plan Technical Meeting Held

The Occohannock Creek Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plan Technical Committee held its first meeting last month to discuss implementation strategies to reduce pollution in the headwaters of Occohannock Creek. Composed of state, local, and regional agency personnel, the Committee will propose a plan for public review this Fall.

At the meeting, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) officials first reviewed its 2006 study of the Creek which indicated a need to reduce pollution loads created by wildlife, humans, pets or livestock by 87%. Virginia Health Department staff then discussed tests that resulted in closing portions of the creek around Shield's Bridge to shellfish harvesting. DEQ has also designated these waters as "impaired" as required by Environmental Protection Agency regulations. The Health Department also reviewed its 2006-2007 survey of the Creek shoreline that identified potential sources of fecal bacteria.

Land use in the Creek watershed was discussed and the Committee outlined state-required procedures for writing an effective plan that will remove the Creek from the impaired waters list and reopen it to aquaculture. The A-NPDC will coordinate this regional plan for Occohannock Creek, whose watershed includes portions of two counties and three towns.



TMDL Implementation Plan Technical Committee Meeting

The next Committee meeting will be held Sept. 13th at the A-NPDC, 23372 Front Street, Accomac. Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) and Health Department staff will review the 2006 study data in more detail. Existing development and agriculture programs that deter runoff in the watershed will be reviewed. A target area for concentrating pollution prevention programs will be delineated, and a first draft list of action items will be proposed. For more information, call Paul Berge or Elaine Meil at (866) 787-3001.

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Safety Workshop Held

The Accomack-Northampton Transportation Technical Advisory Committee held a safety workshop on August 23, 2007. Local transportation, police and government officials were in attendance. A-NPDC staff identified and presented 23 locations where multiple fatal crashes occurred in close proximity to each other. The purpose of the workshop was to identify 20 high priority locations that would receive a road safety audit. After discussion and an interactive display, the Committee requested that staff provide three more critical pieces of information: crash trends at each location, crash causes, and the Route 13 Study recommendations, if any, for that area.



Staff provided the State Police with maps showing locations of fatal crashes, and locations of crashes where alcohol was a factor. The Committee suggested VDOT install rumble strips along the highway and State Police First Sergeant Koushel indicated he would like to see a pilot rumble strip program in both counties. The Committee will meet again September 27th at 1:00 at the Enterprise Building to finalize the priority list that will be forwarded to VDOT's planning program.



E.S. Lead Safe Homes Program and Lead Poisoning

Numerous toys have recently been recalled due to lead poisoning hazards. Recalls include toys and jewelry sold at Walmart, Fisher-Price toys including Dora the Explorer and Sesame Street, Mattel "Sarge" die-cast toy cars, Thomas the Train and Friends, and Curious George toys. For a list of Fisher-Price recalls, go to www.vahealth.org/leadsafe. For Mattel recalls, go to <http://service.mattel.com/us/recall.asp>.

Other risks include speckleware beverage containers, old sinks and tubs, and standard and micro-chip imbedded car keys. **Still, health officials claim that most kids' elevated lead levels result from paint chips and lead dust in deteriorated buildings.**

Most children who have been lead poisoned show no symptoms initially, but can eventually suffer from abnormal brain development and result in

learning disabilities and behavioral disorders. According to Janet East, District Health Department Nurse Supervisor, screening is performed at WIC clinics for children ages 1 and 2, and literature is provided on cleaning where lead hazards are suspected. Ms. East advises parents to have children tested by their pediatricians. Lead dust is almost invisible, but can be cleaned effectively using methods recommended by the Health Dept.

The A-NPDC administers the Lead Safe Homes Program to reduce lead hazards in homes where lead paint and soil contamination is suspected. To apply for the program, families must own or rent a home built before 1978, have children under age 6 spending significant time there, and meet HUD income guidelines. For more information or to apply, call Program Administrator Patti Merritt at 757-787-2936, ext 119.

Final Public Meeting for Shellfish TMDL's at Shore Waterways

The final Public Meeting for shellfish Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL's) for Deep, Hunting & Bagwell Creeks, Chesconessex Creek, Folly Creek, Swans Gut & Greenbackville Harbor will be Tuesday, September 25, 2007 at 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm. in the conference room of the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission, Enterprise Building, 23372 Front Street, Accomac, Virginia. The TMDL figures represent the maximum daily load of pollutants which can be present in waterways before Department of Environmental Quality prohibits harvesting of shellfish. For information on the shellfish TMDL's contact Jennifer S. Howell, TMDL Projects Coordinator, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality at (757) 518-2111, email jshowell@deq.virginia.gov.

Smoke Detectors Save Lives!

According to A-NPDC Housing Specialist and Inspector B.K. Kurzbard, if you own or occupy a Section 8 home, it must have at least one working smoke detector. For a two-story home, a smoke detector must be on each floor. They have to be located near the sleeping areas and mounted in accordance with manufacturers' instructions. If the home has bedrooms on each side of the house, a smoke detector has to be near each sleeping area, thus usually requiring more than one detector on that floor's level. Placing an unnecessary smoke detector in the kitchen area will usually lead to a lot of false alarms created by cooking smoke or heat. Remember to change the battery in the spring and fall when daylight-saving time starts and when it ends. This regulation is not only important for Section 8 clients, but for the rest of us as well. Have you checked your smoke detector lately?

Patricia Connolly Grove Joins the A-NPDC Staff

The A-NPDC is pleased to welcome our new Community Development Coordinator, Patricia Connolly Grove. Patricia will be administering the Homeless Intervention Program (HIP) for the Accomack-Northampton Regional Housing Authority. She will also be expanding our homeownership program by developing relationships with our local banks and other financing agencies. We hope that her efforts will allow us to offer our clients a variety of options for homeownership.

Patricia started her career in banking as a teller and later became a loan officer. She has 20 years of experience in home mortgages, specializing in the low- to moderate-income, first time homebuyer market. Patricia is a certified housing counselor and most recently worked for the Consumer Credit Counseling Service, a non-profit organization in Salisbury, Maryland.



Patricia lives in Snow Hill, Maryland with her husband Denny and has two daughters and two grandsons, ages seven and eight. Her interests include cycling, running, gardening, cooking and yoga. We are pleased to welcome Patricia to our staff and look forward to putting her knowledge and skills to use in creating new programs for homeownership.



How to Contact the A-NPDC

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