

# 2024 STORMWATER CALENDAR



## JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA MAJOR CREEKS AND SIGNIFICANT WATERSHEDS

**BASINS and WATERSHEDS** are interchangeable terms. They are an area of land in which the elevation causes water to flow to a common waterway. They do not follow state or municipal boundaries. Instead, they are defined by mountain ridges and valleys.

TOMBIGBEE WATERSHED

BLACK WARRIOR WATERSHED

JEFFERSON COUNTY, AL

CAHABA RIVER WATERSHED

ALABAMA RIVER WATERSHED

MOBILE RIVER WATERSHED

MOBILE BAY BASIN & WATERSHEDS

The maps displayed on this page have been prepared by Jefferson County Department of Development Services. Any use of these maps shall be at the sole risk of the person or entity using them. Jefferson County makes no warranty, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy of the information represented herein. Source: Alabama Water Watch; Black Warrior River Watershed Management Plan; and United States Geological Survey's National Hydrography Dataset and Watershed Boundary Dataset

The black arrows are to show the direction that the water is flowing in the creeks and rivers.

### Personal Responsibility, Choices and Outcomes

At some point in your life, you may have heard the phrase 'take personal responsibility'. So what is personal responsibility, and what does it mean to take personal responsibility for something? The definition of personal responsibility is accepting the standards that society establishes for individual behavior and then choosing to make the efforts needed to live by those standards. Some examples of standards people choose to accept are obeying laws, observing religious practices, or following a moral code. The concept of personal responsibility comes from the fact that everything we do has consequences, either good or bad, and usually not just for ourselves but for others around us. Even behaviors or choices that do not seem important still can either benefit or cause harm. The value in following a set of accepted standards is that they make people more likely to think before they act, and often their choices have better outcomes.

What does taking personal responsibility look like? Personal responsibility in action can be observed by watching how your family, religious leaders, or respected members of the community conduct themselves and respond to challenges. Sometimes life presents choices or circumstances that can provide opportunities to assume personal responsibility, grow as a person and connect with others. Taking personal responsibility for yourself, your role in your community, and your impact on your environment can make a huge positive difference in your life and the lives of those around you.

It is our hope that the 2024 Stormwater Calendar will provide you with some fresh ways of looking at everyday choices and actions, and offer you some opportunities to learn how you can choose to personally make a positive difference in your community and your environment.

### Water Resources and Contacts

**City of Bessemer Stormwater Program**  
www.bessemeral.org/stormwater; 205-424-4060

**City of Birmingham Stormwater Program**  
www.birminghamal.gov/stormwatermanagement; 205-254-7771

**City of Leeds Stormwater Program**  
www.leedsalabama.org/storm-water; 205-699-2585

**City of Hoover Stormwater Program**  
www.hooveral.org/631/Stormwater-Management; 205-739-6888

**Jefferson County Department of Health Watershed Protection Program / SWMA** 205-930-1999  
www.jcdh.org (search watershed protection program)

**Jefferson County Stormwater Program**  
www.jccal.org; 205-325-8741

**ADEM** adem.state.al.us; 334-260-4501  
Statewide agency that administers the Municipal NPDES Stormwater Permit to local jurisdictions.

**Alabama Water Watch**  
www.alabamawaterwatch.org  
Statewide citizen-based water monitoring program.

**Alabama Rivers Alliance**  
www.alabamarivers.org  
Statewide network of groups working to protect and restore all of Alabama's water resources.

**Black Warrior Riverkeeper**  
www.blackwarriorriver.org  
Organization dedicated to promoting clean water throughout the Black Warrior River watershed.

**Cahaba River Society**  
www.cahabariversociety.org  
Organization working to protect and restore the Cahaba River watershed and its rich diversity of life.

**Cahaba Riverkeeper**  
www.cahabariverkeeper.org  
Organization dedicated to the protection and ecological integrity of the Cahaba watershed.

**Freshwater Land Trust**  
www.freshwaterlandtrust.org  
Organization that conserves, connects, and cares for land and water in Central Alabama.

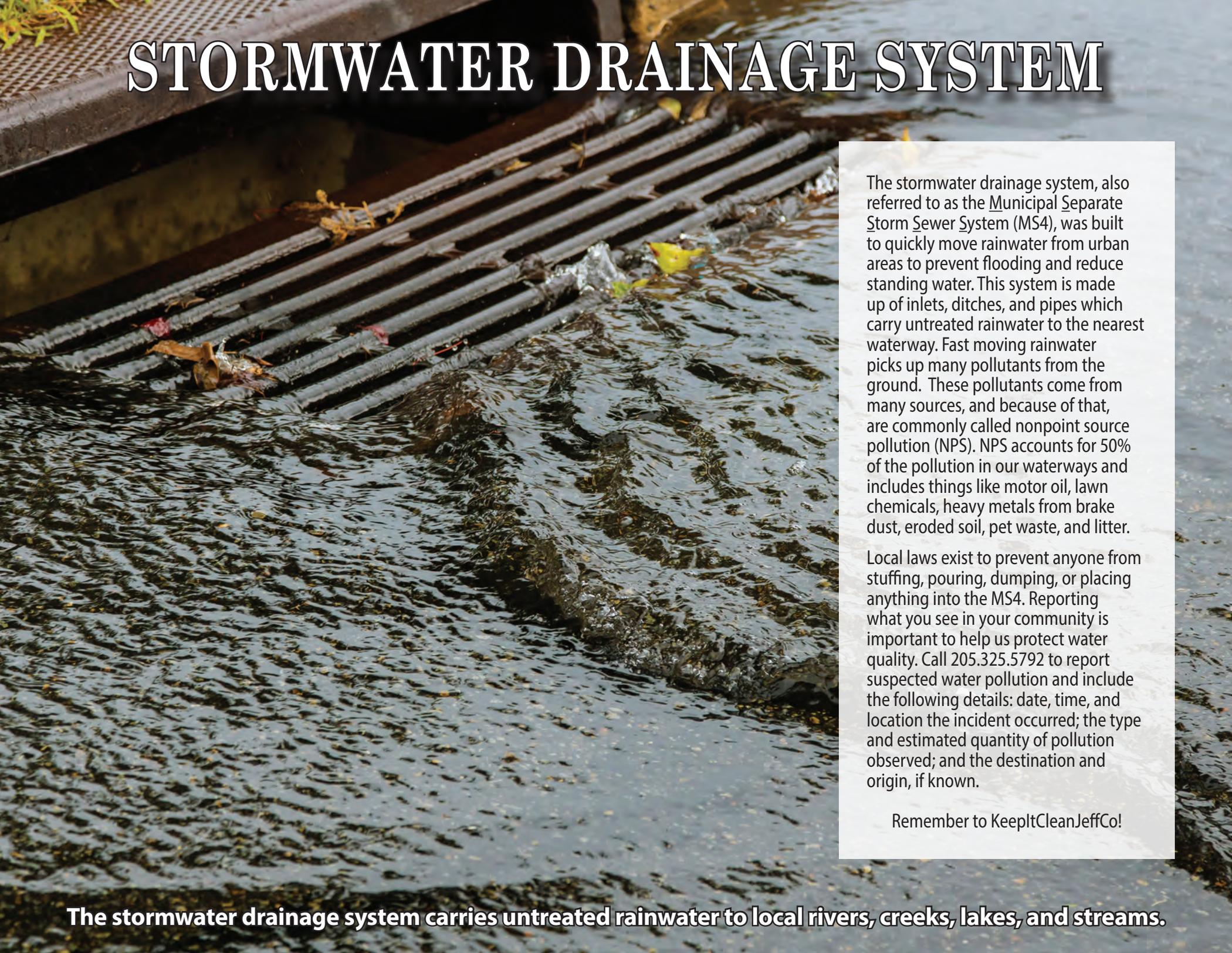
**Friends of Shades Creek**  
www.shadescreek.org  
Organization working for the protection of, and responsible development along Shades Creek.

**Jefferson County Conservation District**  
www.jeffersonco.wixsite.com/jeffersonswcd  
Organization providing service, leadership, & assistance for the wise use, conservation, and development of natural resources.

**Turkey Creek Nature Preserve**  
www.turkeycreeknp.com  
Organization that preserves and restores native habitat within the watershed and offers various educational programs.

**Village Creek Society, Inc.**  
www.villagecreeksociety.org  
Organization that seeks to improve Village Creek.

# STORMWATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM



The stormwater drainage system, also referred to as the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), was built to quickly move rainwater from urban areas to prevent flooding and reduce standing water. This system is made up of inlets, ditches, and pipes which carry untreated rainwater to the nearest waterway. Fast moving rainwater picks up many pollutants from the ground. These pollutants come from many sources, and because of that, are commonly called nonpoint source pollution (NPS). NPS accounts for 50% of the pollution in our waterways and includes things like motor oil, lawn chemicals, heavy metals from brake dust, eroded soil, pet waste, and litter.

Local laws exist to prevent anyone from stuffing, pouring, dumping, or placing anything into the MS4. Reporting what you see in your community is important to help us protect water quality. Call 205.325.5792 to report suspected water pollution and include the following details: date, time, and location the incident occurred; the type and estimated quantity of pollution observed; and the destination and origin, if known.

Remember to KeepItCleanJeffCo!

**The stormwater drainage system carries untreated rainwater to local rivers, creeks, lakes, and streams.**

To report a sanitary sewer overflow call 205-942-0681.

Within unincorporated Jefferson County call 205-325-5792 to report suspected water pollution; call 205-582-6555 to report illegal dumping.

Within the City of Birmingham, call 311.

For all other municipalities, call your local city hall.

# JANUARY 2024

## THIS MONTH RESOLVE TO MAKE ONE CHANGE THIS YEAR TO HELP IMPROVE WATER QUALITY!

January is a good month to ensure your vehicle and gas-powered lawn equipment are in good working order. Spills and leaks from oil and other petroleum products can be washed by rain into waterways. These products are toxic to fish and other animals that live in our creeks and streams.

If you do notice a spill or leak, please quickly and efficiently soak it up by sprinkling absorbent material such as cat litter over the spill. Once the spill is absorbed, sweep it up and properly dispose of the material according to the product label.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<b>1</b> New Year's Day	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Martin Luther King Jr. Day	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Electronic FREE Drop-off Event Salamander Festival
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			
			SPECIAL EVENTS: This month is the Salamander Festival; visit shadescreek.org for details! Recycle your Christmas trees at the Birmingham Zoo. Participate in a MLK Day of Service Litter Clean-Up; visit jccal.org for details!			



# TESTING YOUR SOIL

The secret to having a gorgeous landscape is planting the right plant in the right space as it pertains to light requirements, then giving the plant the correct nutrients and water they need to thrive. It really is that simple. Strong healthy plants not only look terrific, but they can also ward off harmful pests and diseases. Contrarily, weak plants look rough, but even worse they become a smorgasbord for things you didn't even know existed.

All plants have specific light, water, and nutrient needs. Many plants (or plant roots, if you must) are picky about the soils in which they will grow. This makes it tough to garden in Alabama since our soils vary over the state, within a county, across the city, a neighborhood, and even between the front and back yard. While it is easy to figure out how much sun or shade an area gets, and even if the soil is dry or moist, the only sure way to learn about the available nutrients is to have the soil tested. For \$10 per sample, Auburn University's Soil Testing Laboratory will send a report detailing lime, fertilizer, and other nutrient needs within 7 days of receiving the sample. Visit [www.aces.edu/soiltest](http://www.aces.edu/soiltest) for more information and to start the submittal process.



**Overapplied fertilizers are carried by rain to waterways creating algae blooms which can kill fish.**

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# FEBRUARY 2024

## SHOW YOUR WATERSHED SOME LOVE THIS MONTH BY PLANTING A TREE IN HONOR OF ALABAMA'S ARBOR DAY!

Trees and their canopies are useful in reducing stormwater runoff. Trees provide valuable benefits to both commercial and private properties. They help clean the air, reduce energy needs, mitigate heat island effects, and absorb and divert rain fall. Their roots and fallen leaves improve soil and promote the infiltration of rainwater along with providing a wonderful display of color in the fall.

The last week in February is designated as Arbor Week. It started in 1887 with Alabama Governor Thomas Seay signing the state's first Arbor Day Proclamation. Visit [forestry.alabama.gov](http://forestry.alabama.gov) for more information.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Groundhog Day	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Chinese New Year
11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17
18	19 President's Day	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		
Trees are beneficial in reducing Stormwater Runoff, celebrate by planting a tree and helping it grow. Alabama Arbor Week begins February 26.			SPECIAL EVENTS: Register your community to participate in the Spring Clean-Up through the Alabama People Against a Littered State; call 205-325-8741 for more information.			



# PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY



Sadly, people think our roadways are places to leave their trash. They carelessly throw items out of vehicles or dump them directly on the ground, leaving them for others to pick up.

**MYTH:** Litter control is not important.  
**FACT:** Litter is a problem which affects everyone; it is a waste of county/city resources and costs A LOT to clean up.

**MYTH:** Littering creates jobs.  
**FACT:** Staff that pick up litter are pulled from other important work on Jefferson County roads such as paving, mowing, and repairing potholes.

**MYTH:** Litter doesn't hurt anyone.  
**FACT:** Litter is a safety hazard, can harm roadway workers, cause auto accidents, and break mowing equipment.  
**FACT:** Litter is a breeding ground for mosquitos, wildlife, and fires.

**FACT:** Litter lowers property values and increases crime rates.

**FACT:** Litter impacts car insurance rates because of the many auto accidents that are litter related.

Thank your neighbors who take pride in their community and keep it clean. Quick removal of litter prevents your community from becoming a dump site. People can make a difference. Visit [www.litterquitters.org](http://www.litterquitters.org) to learn more.

**Litter is a problem that can easily be controlled, has economic and environmental repercussions as well.**

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# MARCH 2024

## BE MINDFUL OF YOUR LOCAL CREEK WHEN DOING YOUR SPRING CLEANING THIS MONTH!

March madness begins when weeds start to invade every area of your landscape from the lawn to the flower beds. The urge to apply herbicides to kill the spring weeds is strong, but use these products sparingly. Since there are so many products to choose from, it is best to identify what type of weeds you have. Once you know what you need to target, look at the product labels to see which ones will do the job.

The label will also tell you the amount of product you will need to apply including the calibration setting for your equipment.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Daylight Savings Time Begins Ramadan (begins at sundown)	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20	21	22 World Water Day	23
24 Small Holi (first day)	25 Big Holi (second day)	26	27	28	29 Good Friday	30
31 Easter Sunday			SPECIAL EVENTS: Participate in the Valley Creek Spring or the Mulga Loop Road Clean-Up; visit <a href="http://jccal.org">jccal.org</a> for details.			



# HOME GARDEN QUESTIONS?

Alabama Master Gardeners (MG) are volunteers that have been trained by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) in horticulture. They share reliable and relevant science-based gardening information for free. Whether you are growing fruits and vegetables, ornamental shrubs and trees, or even a wildflower meadow, MG can help with gardening questions. While you can find volunteers at local plant sales and farmers markets, you can always call the MG Helpline 1-877-ALA-GROW (877-252-4769) with your home garden questions.

Jefferson County is fortunate to have not only a local group of trained MG volunteers as shown in the picture, but also the ACES Plant Diagnostic Lab located in Birmingham. The lab examines plant, soil and insect samples to diagnose and make recommendations to fix the problem. Visit [aces.edu/go/PlantLab](http://aces.edu/go/PlantLab) for more information.

Include these Stormwater friendly home garden tips in your routine:

- Test your soil before you apply fertilizers.
- Plant the right plant in the correct place, fertilizers cannot compensate for light or moisture issues.
- The label is the law. Apply, store, and dispose of chemicals properly.

Photo, Jefferson County Master Gardeners



Prudent yard care practices help prevent yard chemicals becoming water pollution.

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# APRIL 2024

**SINCE APRIL SHOWERS BRING MAY FLOWERS, THIS IS A PERFECT MONTH TO CONSIDER REDUCING YOUR STORMWATER RUNOFF BY INSTALLING A RAIN BARREL OR A RAIN GARDEN.**

When stormwater moves quickly, it does not have an opportunity to filter into the soil. It can pick up many pollutants from the ground including motor oil, fertilizers, eroded soil, sewage, pet waste, and litter.

Large amounts of fast-moving stormwater can overwhelm drainage systems. When this occurs, streets flood and stream banks erode. You can capture, hold, and allow stormwater to soak into the ground by aerating your lawn or installing a rain garden, or reuse it by collecting it in a rain barrel attached to your gutters.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Ramadan (ends at sundown)	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Voting Begins For LitterQuitters.org!	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Household Hazardous Waste Day
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Tax Day	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Earth Day Passover (begins at sundown)	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>				
			<p>SPECIAL EVENTS: April 22 is Earth Day! Celebrate this month by attending one of the three Household Hazardous Waste Day site locations. Visit <a href="http://jccal.org">jccal.org</a> or call 205-325-874 for details.</p>			



# NUTRIENT POLLUTION



According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), nutrient pollution in the form of nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) is one of America's most widespread, costly, and challenging environmental problems. The source of this type of pollution comes from fertilizers, yard and pet waste, failing septic systems, and overflowing sewer lines. While N and P are vital nutrients to the life of plants, giving them strong roots and vigorous, green leafy growth, applying too much at one time is not necessary. It is a waste of time and money and can have negative consequences when rain washes the excess to waterways which can cause algae blooms. Significant increases in algae harm water quality, aquatic food resources and habitats, and decrease the oxygen that fish and other aquatic life needs to survive. Next time you are ready to fertilize your lawn, find out what nutrients are needed for your desired effects.

Preventing water pollution does not fall on just one person or one industry. Below are ways you can help do your part:

- Test your soil before you buy and only apply the nutrients the soil needs.
- Calibrate your spreader based upon product application recommendations.
- Store yard products in a secure, dry area, away from water or rain.
- Properly dispose of extra or unwanted products at Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day Events.

**Excess fertilizer can wash by rain into the nearest waterway causing water pollution.**

To report a sanitary sewer overflow call 205-942-0681.

Within unincorporated Jefferson County call 205-325-5792 to report suspected water pollution; call 205-582-6555 to report illegal dumping.

Within the City of Birmingham, call 311.

For all other municipalities, call your local city hall.

# MAY 2024

**BE CAREFUL WITH YARD CHEMICALS AND PLEASE DON'T HARM ALL THE BUGS IN YOUR LANDSCAPE. REMEMBER CATERPILLARS TURN INTO BUTTERFLIES AND BABY BIRDS FEED ON ALL KINDS OF INSECTS!**

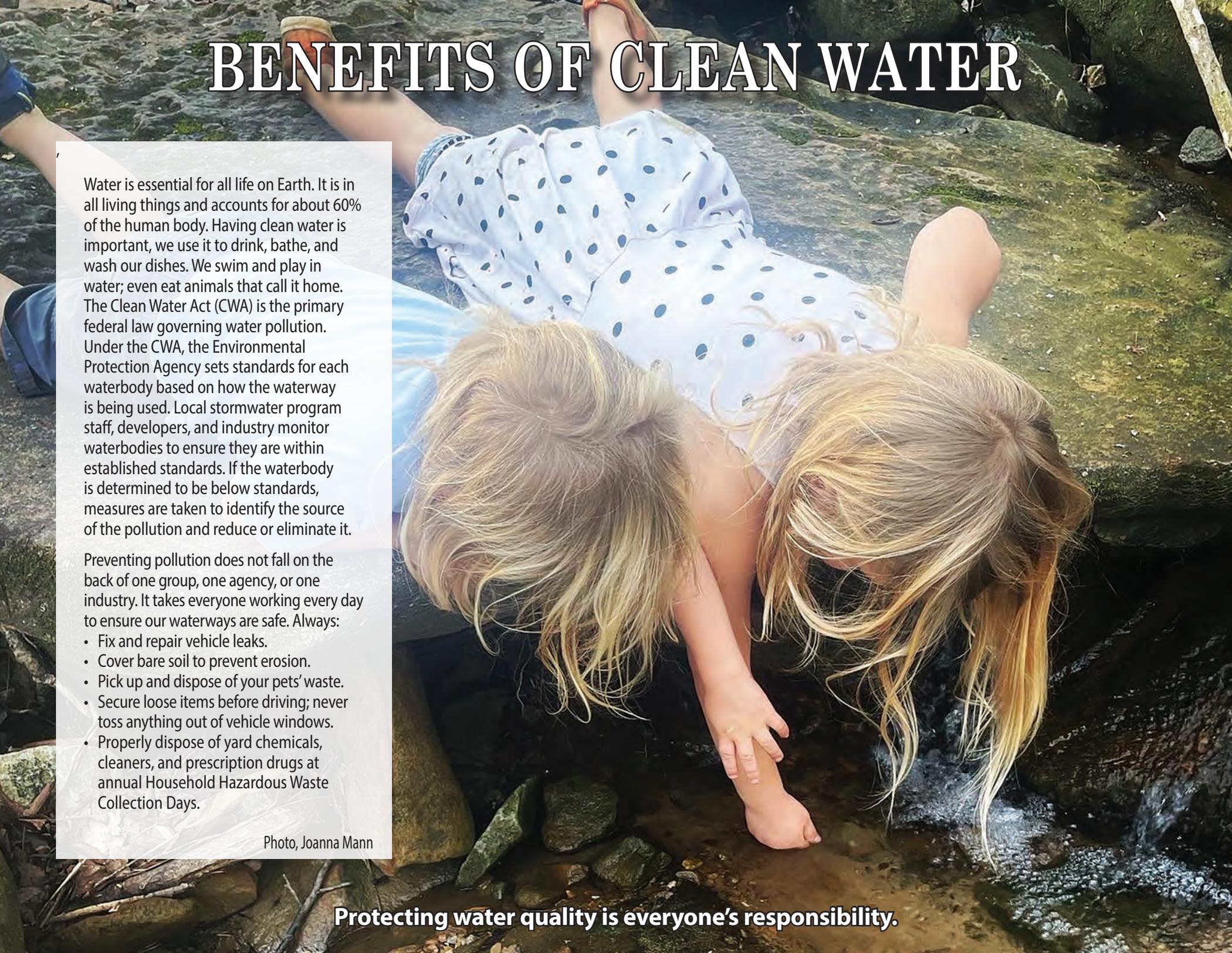
Not all garden bugs are bad. Some are beneficial and eat bad bugs, others turn into pollinators and all of them are food for baby birds.

If your yard is being overtaken by bugs, call the Alabama Extension's local Plant Diagnostic Lab housed at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. They can help identify what is bugging you along with suggestions to resolve it. Call 205-879-6964 for further information.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4 Cinco de Mayo
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Electronic FREE Drop-Off Event
12 Mother's Day	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 Memorial Day	28	29	30	31	
			<p>SPECIAL EVENTS: Attend this month's Electronic FREE Drop-Off and Paper Shredding event held at the Jefferson County Satellite Courthouse in Center Point from 9:00am - 11:30am. Call 205-325-8741 for more information or visit <a href="http://jccal.org">jccal.org</a>.</p>			



# BENEFITS OF CLEAN WATER



Water is essential for all life on Earth. It is in all living things and accounts for about 60% of the human body. Having clean water is important, we use it to drink, bathe, and wash our dishes. We swim and play in water; even eat animals that call it home. The Clean Water Act (CWA) is the primary federal law governing water pollution. Under the CWA, the Environmental Protection Agency sets standards for each waterbody based on how the waterway is being used. Local stormwater program staff, developers, and industry monitor waterbodies to ensure they are within established standards. If the waterbody is determined to be below standards, measures are taken to identify the source of the pollution and reduce or eliminate it.

Preventing pollution does not fall on the back of one group, one agency, or one industry. It takes everyone working every day to ensure our waterways are safe. Always:

- Fix and repair vehicle leaks.
- Cover bare soil to prevent erosion.
- Pick up and dispose of your pets' waste.
- Secure loose items before driving; never toss anything out of vehicle windows.
- Properly dispose of yard chemicals, cleaners, and prescription drugs at annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection Days.

Photo, Joanna Mann

**Protecting water quality is everyone's responsibility.**

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# JUNE 2024

**BE MINDFUL THIS MONTH WHEN APPLYING LAWN CHEMICALS, ESPECIALLY FERTILIZERS THAT CONTAIN PHOSPHORUS (P).**

Alabama soils naturally contain high levels of P (the middle number on a fertilizer bag). Applying this nutrient that will not be taken up by plants will cause it to be washed by rainwater to the nearest creeks or streams causing algae blooms. Significant increases in algae decrease the oxygen levels in waterways that fish and other aquatic life need to survive.

Save money and the environment; test your soil to find out what type of fertilizer your grass needs to be green and healthy. Soil test kits are available at the Alabama Cooperative Extension System offices. Call 205-879-6964 for details.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> World Environment Day	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> World Oceans Day Electronic FREE Drop-Off Event
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> Father's Day	<b>17</b> Juneteenth Independence Day	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b>	The following center page, as well as the first two pages, can be used as a poster when you are done with the calendar. Just carefully take out the staples.		SPECIAL EVENTS: Attend this month's Electronic FREE Drop-Off and Paper Shredding event held at the Jefferson County Valley Creek Water Reclamation Facility in Bessemer from 9:00am - 11:30am. Call 205-325-8741 for more information or visit <a href="http://jccal.org">jccal.org</a> .			



# Stormwater: Where It Flows, Everything Goes

When it rains, snows, or sleet, water hits hard surfaces and takes anything on that surface with it, through drains, pipes, and ditches to local rivers, lakes, and streams.

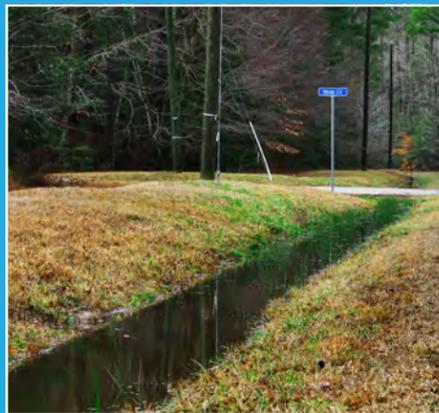


## Where Stormwater Flows, Everything Goes



### The Stormwater Drainage System

This system is a series of curb inlets, ditches, and pipes that funnel rainwater directly to the nearest waterway with no treatment. It plays a vital role in urban areas to manage stormwater runoff and primarily to prevent flooding. While this system is critical to prevent flooding, it also allows whatever rainwater picks up to be carried into waterways.



All of Jefferson County's waterways flow to Mobile Bay, then to the Gulf of Mexico.  
Your actions, good or bad, impact everyone downstream.



# PROTECTING WATERWAYS

Alabama is blessed to have 10% of the freshwater resources of the continental U.S. starting or originating in its borders, equating to roughly 132,000 miles of rivers and streams, more miles of navigable rivers than any other state!

Waterways are a vital part of any community; they provide drinking water, recreational opportunities, scenic views, irrigation for crops, industry, and most of all, habitats for wildlife. Sadly, our waterways are threatened by stormwater pollution.

Although stormwater pollution is a major problem and a complicated issue, people can be part of the solution by making these simple changes:

- Properly dispose of trash, do not litter!
- Cover bare areas in your landscape to prevent erosion.
- Pickup your pets' waste to prevent nutrients and pathogens from washing into waterways.
- Fix and maintain vehicles to prevent drips and drops.
- Immediately contain and soak up spilled chemicals, never wash away with a hose to a storm drain.

Remember to [KeepItCleanJeffCo](#) and allow only rain in the storm drain!

Photo, Nelson Brooke

**Rainwater in Jefferson County ultimately drains to Mobile Bay and lastly the Gulf of Mexico!**

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# JULY 2024

## THIS INDEPENDANCE DAY, CELEBRATE YOUR RIGHT TO CLEAN WATER!

The Clean Water Act and its Amendments were enacted to protect the health and safety of Americans. Its primary objective is to restore and maintain the integrity of the nation's waters. It regulates the types and amounts of pollutants that can be released into waterways to achieve their set water quality standard levels.

You can get involved in keeping water clean by supporting and participating with your local watershed group. See the calendar's first two pages for a listing of groups in and around Jefferson County.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Independence Day	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			

The previous center page, as well as the first two pages, can be used as a poster when you are done with the calendar. Just carefully take out the staples.

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**  
Attend the Float Your Boat Summer Festival this month at the Turkey Creek Nature Preserve, visit [turkeycreeknpr.com](http://turkeycreeknpr.com) for details.



# REDUCING STORMWATER RUNOFF



Developed areas have more impervious surfaces such as roofs, streets, driveways, and sidewalks which do not allow rain to soak into the ground as it does in nature. Rain washes quickly over these solid surfaces to the stormwater drainage system where it is funneled to the nearest creek, river, or stream. It carries everything with it that it meets: soil from bare spots in the yard, yard chemicals applied in excess, waste from pets that was not picked up, and trash that was tossed out of vehicles along the road, to our waterways creating water pollution. When it pours, this fastmoving water can cause gullies in our landscape, erode our creekbanks and contribute to localized flooding. The more we can slow down the water leaving our roofs, spread it out into our landscaped areas allowing it time to filter into the ground, the less runoff we have. Redirecting roof runoff to landscaped areas and giving it room to spread out and soak into the ground is an easy first step. Installing a rain barrel to your downspout, or a rain garden where your runoff is directed are other good options.

**Takeaway:** Anytime you can manage rain close to where it falls, it reduces stormwater runoff which can help prevent water pollution, localized flooding and protect our drinking water sources.

**Redirecting roof runoff to landscaped areas allows the rain to slow down, spread out, and soak into the ground.**

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# AUGUST 2024

## REMIND YOUR KIDS TO NOT LITTER WHEN HEADING BACK TO SCHOOL!

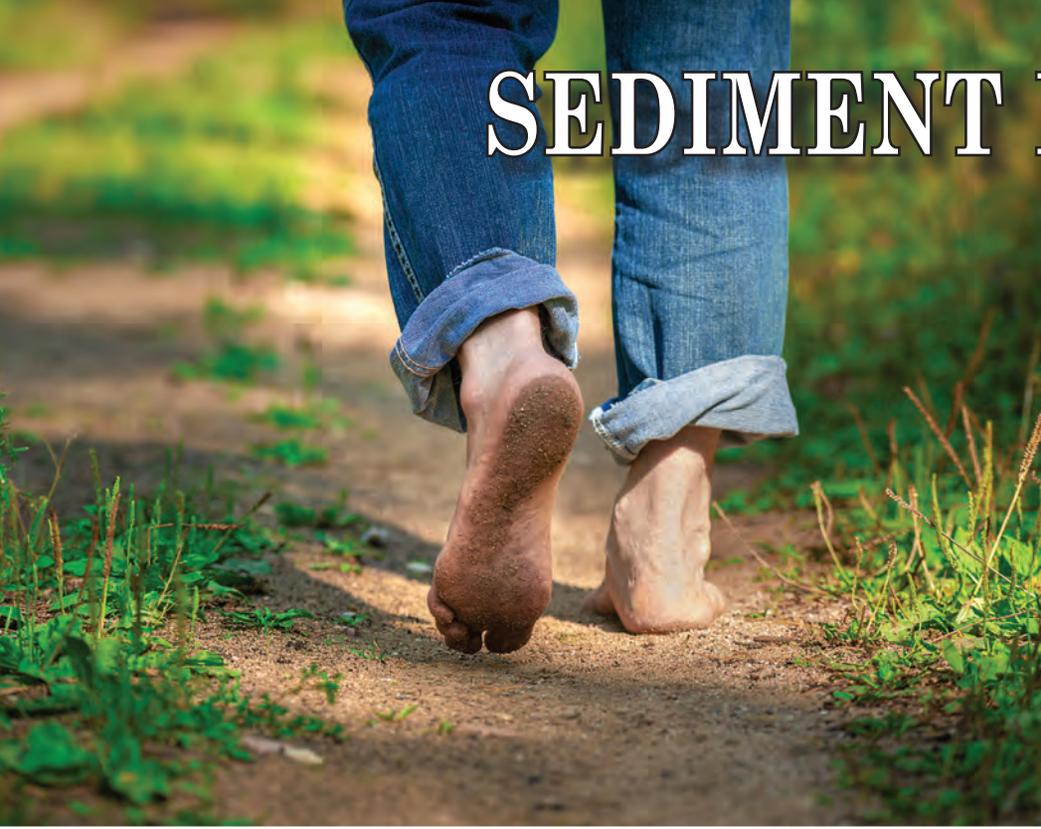
Littering continues to be a major challenge in Jefferson County. Not only is litter unsightly, but it also affects the quality of life and the environment. Rain washes litter into creeks and rivers where many residents enjoy boating and fishing, and from where our drinking water supply is drawn.

If you litter, then please stop. Reinforce this message with your family members, especially your teenage kids. There are so many opportunities to get rid of unwanted trash from your car, including trash receptacles next to the pumps at every gas station. Visit [LitterQuitters.org](http://LitterQuitters.org) to learn what students are doing to combat the littering epidemic.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
				SPECIAL EVENTS: Make plans to participate in the Fall Valley Creek Volunteer Litter Clean-Up.		



# SEDIMENT POLLUTION



Most yards have them, that worn path in the grass that gets the most foot traffic where the grass has died, leaving soil exposed. Usually, the only negative thought about the bare spot is how it looks. Why would anyone think this bare soil could cause any harm?

As innocent as it seems, soil that is exposed to rain gets washed away and carried into the neighborhood curb inlet where it eventually drains into the nearest creek, river, lake, or stream. The rain is not treated along the way, whatever it picks up and carries also ends up in our waterways, turning clean water into muddy or murky water. This sediment pollution has serious impacts on our waterways and wildlife. It can suffocate fish by clogging their gills and impair their vision, hindering them from finding food. It does eventually settle out and cover the creek beds which displaces water, causing the creekbanks to overflow.

We all play a role when it comes to healthy waterways. A simple step you can do at home is to make sure all worn paths are covered; pavers, pebbles, and mulch are easy choices.

Remember to [KeepItCleanJeffCo!](#)

**Bare soil can erode causing sediment pollution which can clog drains and harm wildlife.**

To report a sanitary sewer overflow call 205-942-0681.

Within unincorporated Jefferson County call 205-325-5792 to report suspected water pollution; call 205-582-6555 to report illegal dumping.

Within the City of Birmingham, call 311.

For all other municipalities, call your local city hall.

# SEPTEMBER 2024

**PLEASE HELP STOP LOCALIZED FLOODING; KEEP YARD DEBRIS OUT OF THE STORMWATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM.**

The stormwater drainage system is designed for rainwater only. When this system gets clogged with leaves and grass clippings, there is no room for the rainwater to enter and flooding occurs.

If you hire a yard professional, make sure they don't blow yard debris into the street, curb inlet or drainage ditch.

Not all cities offer loose leaf curbside pickup, so check before placing leaf and other yard debris at the curb. Call your local city hall to find out what yard debris services/ resources they offer.

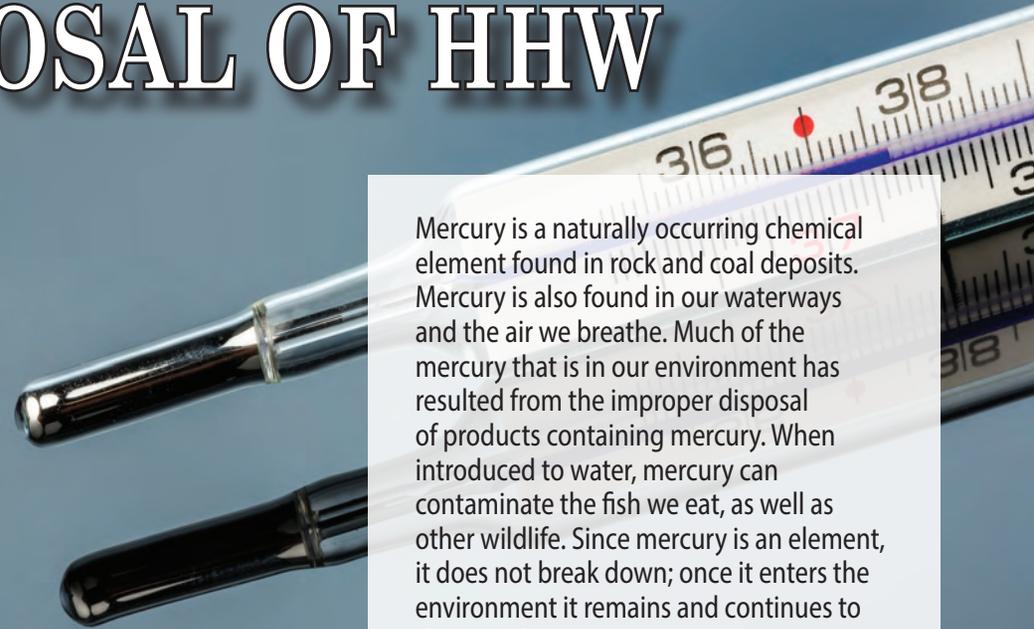
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> Labor Day	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> World Rivers Day	<b>30</b>					
			SPECIAL EVENTS: Fall Shades Creek Volunteer Litter Clean-Up, visit <a href="http://shadescreek.org">shadescreek.org</a> for more information. Fall Village Creek Volunteer Litter Clean-Up; call 205-325-8741 for details.			



# PROPER DISPOSAL OF HHW



Household items that contain mercury require special care when disposing of them.



Mercury is a naturally occurring chemical element found in rock and coal deposits. Mercury is also found in our waterways and the air we breathe. Much of the mercury that is in our environment has resulted from the improper disposal of products containing mercury. When introduced to water, mercury can contaminate the fish we eat, as well as other wildlife. Since mercury is an element, it does not break down; once it enters the environment it remains and continues to damage the ecosystem.

If you have any of the following items in your home, please dispose of them properly by bringing them to a Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Day Event held in April and the third weekend in October. Sources of mercury include:

- antique glass or silvered mirrors
- appliances (older electric and gas-fired)
- automotive light switches and relays
- button cell batteries (kitchen scales, watches, laser pointers)
- fluorescent and CFL light bulbs
- LCD screens and monitors
- paint manufactured prior to 1990
- thermometers / barometers
- thermostats

Remember KeepItCleanJeffCo!

Visit [www.jccal.org](http://www.jccal.org) for the

2025 HHW Collection Day event dates!



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# OCTOBER 2024

## YOU CAN HELP REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF NUTRIENTS IN OUR WATERWAYS!

Nutrient pollution is the process where too many nutrients, mainly nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P), are washed by rain into waterways. These nutrients come from overapplied fertilizers, sewer overflows, dog waste, and failing septic systems and can be prevented. Remember to:

Test your soil at least once every three years. Apply only the lacking nutrients the plant needs based on your test. Calibrate the spreader to ensure the correct amount of product is applied.

Have your septic system inspected and pumped out at least every five years.

Always pick up your pet's waste, bag it, and place it in the trash for proper disposal.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> Rosh Hashanah (begins at sundown)	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Yom Kippur (begins at sundown)	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Columbus Day (observed)	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Household Hazardous Waste Day
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> Halloween Diwali (first day)		
			SPECIAL EVENTS: Plan to attend Jefferson County's Fall Household Hazardous Waste Day from 8:00am -11:30am taking place at two locations. Visit <a href="http://jccal.org">jccal.org</a> or call 205-325-8741 for more information.			



# LAND DISTURBING ACTIVITIES



Earth, dirt, or soil (no matter what you call it) is made up of tiny particles of sand, clay, rock and organic matter. When exposed to rain and wind, these particles turn into sediment pollution that can clog the stormwater drainage system and cause streets to flood. Sediments have serious impacts on our waterways, adversely impacting water quality and wildlife. It clogs gills, suffocating fish and impairs the vision of fish and other aquatic animals hindering them from finding food. Sediment settles out and covers the creek bed which destroys nestingsites, smotherseggs, and displaces water leading to flooding.

Yes, sediment pollution can occur naturally; certain soils are prone to erosion, storms uproot trees, and droughts kill vegetation leading to exposed soils. But erosion is also caused by clearing land for building, sodding, landscaping, etc. Local jurisdictions have regulations that require best management practices to be installed and maintained when land is disturbed and soil is exposed. Before you do ANY land disturbing activities, call your city or Jefferson County to determine if a Land Disturbance Permit is needed. Be sure to find out what steps you need to take to prevent soil erosion and consequent sedimentation.

Photo, AU-SRF

**Sedimentation is the leading cause of water pollution in the United States of America.**

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Within the City of Birmingham, call 311.

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# NOVEMBER 2024

## HELP PREVENT SANITARY SEWER OVERFLOWS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.

Deep fried turkeys and other fried foods generate many gallons of used cooking oil and grease. Pouring these items down the kitchen sink drain creates problems at your home and in the sanitary sewer system. Backups and overflows are costly to repair, smell bad, and are hazardous to your health.

Allow grease to cool and then pour into a container to recycle. New, clean recycling containers are available for FREE at all Jefferson County collection centers. Visit [www.jeffcoes.org](http://www.jeffcoes.org) to find a location near you.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 Daylight Savings Time Ends Diwali ( last day)	4	5 Election Day	6	7	8	9
10	11 Veterans Day	12	13	14	15 America Recycles Day	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Thanksgiving Day	29	30



# SAVE WATER

Water is a finite resource. While we cannot make more water, we can take action to protect the water we have. Yes, the earth's surface primarily consists of water (about 70% water and 30% land), yet only 1% of all the water is surface or fresh water that is easily available for use by agriculture, business, industry and as drinking water.

Alabama has 132,000 miles of rivers and streams, 10% of the freshwater resources in the continental United States and ranks #1 in the U.S for freshwater crayfish, fish, snail, turtle, and mussel species. Sadly, 70% of the species in Alabama that are listed as federally endangered or threatened are those that live in our waterways. Having and keeping our waterways clean is extremely important.

Everyone can help. Be a hero by making sure that rain is the only thing entering the stormwater drainage system!  
Remember to KeepItCleanJeffCo!



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# DECEMBER 2024

**“FLUSHABLE WIPES”  
SHOULD NEVER BE  
FLUSHED DOWN  
THE TOILET!  
THEY CAUSE BLOCKAGES  
THAT CAN LEAD TO  
OVERFLOWS IN THE  
SANTITARY  
SEWER SYSTEM.**

“Flushable” baby wipes, personal care wipes, and disinfecting wipes might work well for the job at hand, but they are NOT flushable. These wipes take much longer to break down than traditional toilet paper that is designed to disintegrate in water when flushed into the sanitary sewer or septic tank. As wipes make their way down the pipes, rather than breaking down quickly, they create clogs that lead to blockages and cause sanitary sewer overflows.

Place all used wipes, “flushable” or not, in the household trash for proper disposal.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day Hanukkah (beings at sundown)	26 Kwanzaa begins	27	28
29	30	31 New Year's Eve				

This calendar converts into 3 posters you can hang on the wall. When this month is over, safely remove the staples. The first 2 pages and the center page are now posters!

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**

Attend the upcoming Electronic FREE Drop-off and Paper Shredding Event, visit [jccal.org](http://jccal.org) or call 205-325-8741 for details.

Recycle your Christmas trees at the Birmingham Zoo; more information is available at [birminghamzoo.com](http://birminghamzoo.com).



## JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA MAJOR CREEKS AND SIGNIFICANT WATERSHEDS

**BASINS and WATERSHEDS** are interchangeable terms. They are an area of land in which the elevation causes water to flow to a common waterway. They do not follow state or municipal boundaries. Instead, they are defined by mountain ridges and valleys.

TOMBIGBEE WATERSHED

BLACK WARRIOR WATERSHED

JEFFERSON COUNTY, AL

CAHABA RIVER WATERSHED

ALABAMA RIVER WATERSHED

MOBILE RIVER WATERSHED

MOBILE BAY BASIN & WATERSHEDS

The maps displayed on this page have been prepared by Jefferson County Department of Development Services. Any use of these maps shall be at the sole risk of the person or entity using them. Jefferson County makes no warranty, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy of the information represented herein. Source: Alabama Water Watch; Black Warrior River Watershed Management Plan; and United States Geological Survey's National Hydrography Dataset and Watershed Boundary Dataset

The black arrows are to show the direction that the water is flowing in the creeks and rivers.

### Personal Responsibility, Choices and Outcomes

At some point in your life, you may have heard the phrase 'take personal responsibility'. So what is personal responsibility, and what does it mean to take personal responsibility for something? The definition of personal responsibility is accepting the standards that society establishes for individual behavior and then choosing to make the efforts needed to live by those standards. Some examples of standards people choose to accept are obeying laws, observing religious practices, or following a moral code. The concept of personal responsibility comes from the fact that everything we do has consequences, either good or bad, and usually not just for ourselves but for others around us. Even behaviors or choices that do not seem important still can either benefit or cause harm. The value in following a set of accepted standards is that they make people more likely to think before they act, and often their choices have better outcomes.

What does taking personal responsibility look like? Personal responsibility in action can be observed by watching how your family, religious leaders, or respected members of the community conduct themselves and respond to challenges. Sometimes life presents choices or circumstances that can provide opportunities to assume personal responsibility, grow as a person and connect with others. Taking personal responsibility for yourself, your role in your community, and your impact on your environment can make a huge positive difference in your life and the lives of those around you.

It is our hope that the 2024 Stormwater Calendar will provide you with some fresh ways of looking at everyday choices and actions, and offer you some opportunities to learn how you can choose to personally make a positive difference in your community and your environment.

### Water Resources and Contacts

**City of Bessemer Stormwater Program**  
www.bessemeral.org/stormwater; 205-424-4060

**City of Birmingham Stormwater Program**  
www.birminghamal.gov/stormwatermanagement; 205-254-7771

**City of Leeds Stormwater Program**  
www.leedsalabama.org/storm-water; 205-699-2585

**City of Hoover Stormwater Program**  
www.hooveral.org/631/Stormwater-Management; 205-739-6888

**Jefferson County Department of Health Watershed Protection Program / SWMA** 205-930-1999  
www.jcdh.org (search watershed protection program)

**Jefferson County Stormwater Program**  
www.jccal.org; 205-325-8741

**ADEM** adem.state.al.us; 334-260-4501  
Statewide agency that administers the Municipal NPDES Stormwater Permit to local jurisdictions.

**Alabama Water Watch**  
www.alabamawaterwatch.org  
Statewide citizen-based water monitoring program.

**Alabama Rivers Alliance**  
www.alabamarivers.org  
Statewide network of groups working to protect and restore all of Alabama's water resources.

**Black Warrior Riverkeeper**  
www.blackwarriorriver.org  
Organization dedicated to promoting clean water throughout the Black Warrior River watershed.

**Cahaba River Society**  
www.cahabariversociety.org  
Organization working to protect and restore the Cahaba River watershed and its rich diversity of life.

**Cahaba Riverkeeper**  
www.cahabariverkeeper.org  
Organization dedicated to the protection and ecological integrity of the Cahaba watershed.

**Freshwater Land Trust**  
www.freshwaterlandtrust.org  
Organization that conserves, connects, and cares for land and water in Central Alabama.

**Friends of Shades Creek**  
www.shadescreek.org  
Organization working for the protection of, and responsible development along Shades Creek.

**Jefferson County Conservation District**  
www.jeffersonco.wixsite.com/jeffersonswcd  
Organization providing service, leadership, & assistance for the wise use, conservation, and development of natural resources.

**Turkey Creek Nature Preserve**  
www.turkeycreeknp.com  
Organization that preserves and restores native habitat within the watershed and offers various educational programs.

**Village Creek Society, Inc.**  
www.villagecreeksociety.org  
Organization that seeks to improve Village Creek.



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM**

**JEFFERSON COUNTY COMMISSION**



Photo provided by Nelson Brooke