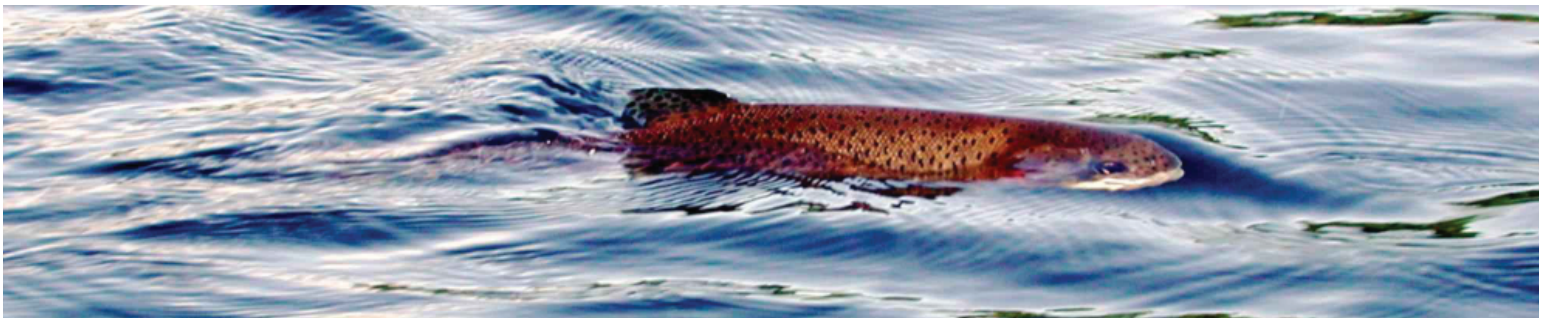
MS4 Permit:

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System



Did you know that your municipality has an MS4 permit? The Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program was administrated through the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) in 1999. Pennsylvania implemented state regulation of the MS4 permit in 2003. The underlying goal of the MS4 program is to prevent stormwater pollution from entering streams, lakes, ponds, rivers, etc. Municipalities are required through the EPA and PA DEP to implement a stormwater management program comprising of 6 minimum control measures (MCMs).

MCM #1 Public Education and Outreach Program

Requirements are to educate the public on stormwater pollution and prevention. Distribution of stormwater educational materials can occur through bulletin boards, newsletters, magazines, public meetings, Township's webpage, and social media.

MCM #2 Environmental Activities and Events

Requirements are to promote environmentally related activities for public participation. Some examples are planting days, cleanup programs, storm drain stenciling, and collection events.

MCM #3 Illicit Discharge, Detection and Elimination

Requirements are to develop, implement and enforce a program to detect and eliminate illicit non-stormwater discharges. The program primarily consists of a storm sewer system map, an ordinance prohibiting illicit discharges, stormwater outfall screenings, and illicit discharge education.

MCM #4 Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control

The goal of this MCM is to reduce stormwater pollution from construction sites disturbing one or more acres. In Pennsylvania, Townships typically rely on PA DEP's statewide program that requires the local county conservation district to undertake these tasks.

MCM #5 Post Construction Stormwater Management

Half of these MCM requirements are fulfilled through the local county conservation district. Encouraging low impact development, implementing an ordinance for post construction runoff, and enacting a program for operation and maintenance of stormwater best management practices (BMPs) are the Township's responsibilities.

MCM #6 Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping

Educating and training Township staff to prevent and reduce stormwater pollution from municipal activities is the last MCM of the MS4 permit. These municipal activities consist of but are not limited to winter road maintenance, salt storage, street sweeping, and lawn mowing. The Township is required to develop written standard operating procedures (SOPs) for each activity that can generate stormwater pollution.

These 6 MCMs not only rely on the Municipality for compliance, but cooperation and participation with its citizens to further advance the stormwater pollution prevention efforts.