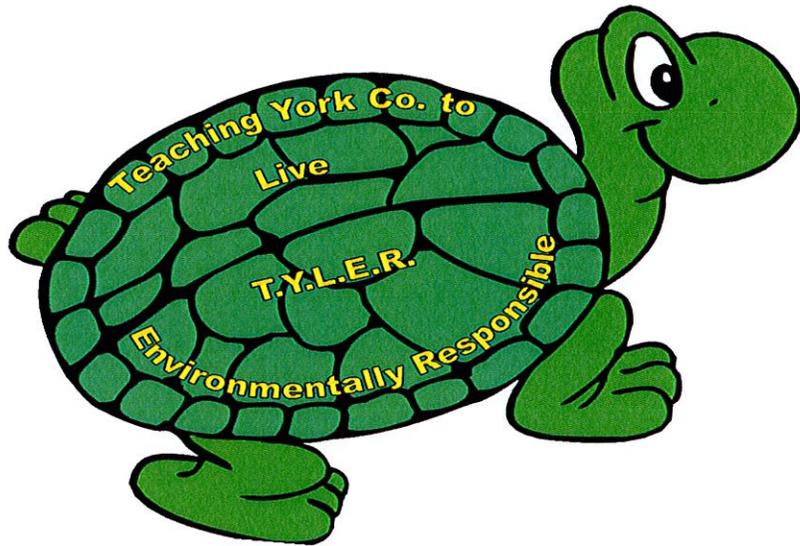


# York County Government Adopt-A-Stream Program



## Policies and Procedures Manual

Date of Adoption: October 5, 2009

Brought to you by:



***York County's Adopt-A-Stream Program has been established to improve the quality of water in our lakes, river and streams by establishing a connection between citizens and their surrounding environment. This Program will provide the opportunity for them to experience the impacts of their efforts on the quality of water.***

Initiated by York County Government in 2009, the Adopt-A-Stream Program encourages citizen-based stewardship of the County's natural water resources, promoting education and outreach, and facilitating community team building. York County Government coordinates with citizens participating in the Adopt-A-Stream Program and is dedicated to working with citizens to clean-up York County's waterways. The successful implementation of the program depends on the involvement and support from existing local and regional organizations, including government, soil and water conservation districts, environmental groups, and the citizens of York County.

Cleaning up and maintaining York County's natural waterways litter-free is a task that requires cooperation and participation from government entities, industries, businesses, and residents alike. Stream clean-ups provide opportunities for local businesses, civic organizations, churches, watershed associations, academic institutions, homeowner associations, and scout groups to work independently or collectively to help in keeping York County's water resources clean and litter-free. The Adopt-A-Stream Program requires groups to conduct a clean-up at least twice per year, once in the spring and once in the fall.

Waterway clean-up projects provide valuable learning experiences. A Saturday morning spent collecting litter from a local stream establishes a connection between citizens and the stream that runs through their community. Citizens will see first-hand, the impacts of their clean-up efforts on the condition of the stream and quality of the water. Ultimately, York County Government hopes such clean-up efforts will encourage and empower citizens to organize and participate in other activities aimed at improving the water quality in York County.

The success of a clean-up event will depend on the organization and implementation of a waterway clean-up plan. This Adopt-A-Stream Policies and Procedures Manual will provide you with the information needed to organize and implement such a plan from start to finish.

This document, as well as all necessary forms, can be downloaded from the Adopt-A-Stream Program link at [www.yorkcountygov.com](http://www.yorkcountygov.com).

Any questions or comments should be directed to the Environmental Compliance Coordinator at:

York County Government  
Planning and Development  
Environmental Compliance  
1070 Heckle Blvd, 107  
Rock Hill SC 29732  
803-909-7200  
Web: [www.yorkcountygov.com/tyler](http://www.yorkcountygov.com/tyler)  
[Caci.Nance@yorkcountygov.com](mailto:Caci.Nance@yorkcountygov.com)

## Table of Contents

1. Purpose and Need .....	1
2. Adopting a Stream .....	1
General Program Conditions.....	1
Site Selection Conditions.....	2
Stream Clean-up Preparation Conditions.....	3
Stream Clean-up Event Day Conditions.....	3
3. Storm Drain Stenciling Program (Optional) .....	4
Why Stencil Storm Drains? .....	4
Storm Drain Stenciling Guidelines .....	5
4. Adopt-a-Stream Safety Guidelines .....	5
5. Forms	
Application for Local Program Designation and Agreement.....	A
Grant of Permission to Enter Upon or Cross Over Private Property.....	B
Informed Consent; Liability and Hold Harmless; Publicity Permission.....	C
Adopt-A-Stream Field Data Sheet.....	D

## 1. Purpose and Need

When the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) was enacted as part of the 1972 Clean Water Act, it was thought that point source pollution (from industrial facilities, sewage treatment plants, etc.) was the main contributor to our nation's growing water pollution problem. It later became evident that non-point source pollution (such as stormwater transporting pollutants as it flows to our waterways) was drastically degrading the water quality of our streams, lakes and oceans. As a result, the Clean Water Act was amended to include provisions to reduce non-point source pollution. As part of the Amendments, many local Governments including York County Government, are now covered under a federally enforceable NPDES Permit.

Many of the lakes and streams located within York County have been identified as impaired. If our County continues to grow as it has been, it will become increasingly more difficult to clean up our waterways. It is York County Government's responsibility to work together through education and outreach to the residents of our County to clean up our County waterways and prevent further impairment. With all of the miles of streams within York County, volunteers are needed to assist in locating and reporting water pollution problems. One of the best ways to find problems is to get in the streams and walk the channels. Through a volunteer Adopt-A-Stream program, residents of York County can be watershed stewards by cleaning up our waterways and notifying our environmental compliance team of any existing or potential water quality problems found during their clean-up efforts.

## 2. Adopting a Stream

York County encourages local businesses, civic organizations, churches, watershed associations, academic institutions, homeowner associations, and scout groups to adopt local streams, rivers, lakes, and coves for the purpose of keeping them free of litter and potential pollutants.

### General Program Conditions

1. Adopting organizations will be awarded an Adopt-A-Stream sign which will include the organization's name. The sign will be erected at a location of their choice, which should be in an area that is visible to the public (example: bridge crossing). Permission must be secured before posting on private property. Representatives of York County Government will be available to help determine the best location of this sign.
2. Each group must include a participating adult 18 years or older. Individuals under 18 years of age may participate in a stream clean-up if supervised by an adult.
3. Adopting groups agree to collect litter on both sides of the stream (around the entire cove) at least two times per year. York County recommends one clean-up in the spring

and one in the fall. Traditionally, the amount of litter is greatest during these times due to spring runoff and the end of the water recreation season.

4. The adopting group is encouraged to adopt a stream for a period not less than two years. After the two years, organizations may renew their designation and agreement on an annual basis or modify their designation (choose a different stream section).
5. York County reserves the right to deny an adoption request or to cancel the Local Program Designation and Agreement of any group.

## Site Selection Conditions

1. Each group must select a reach of stream or a cove and contact York County Environmental Compliance to discuss their site selection and obtain approval from the Environmental Compliance Coordinator (the Environmental Compliance Coordinator serves as York County's Adopt-A-Stream Coordinator). The Coordinator will assist the group in locating a suitable area. Please contact the Adopt-A-Stream Coordinator at:

York County Planning & Development  
Environmental Compliance Division  
Phone: (803) 909-7136  
E-mail: [Caci.Nance@yorkcountygov.com](mailto:Caci.Nance@yorkcountygov.com)

2. The amount of time required to clean each section of stream will vary depending on the length of stream section and the number of volunteers, but should last approximately 2 to 4 hours. Typically, a team of two people can cover one mile of a lightly littered stream in about one or two hours. York County suggests groups adopt no less than one mile of stream or river (depends on the size of your organization). Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons are popular stream clean-up times.
3. When scouting your community for a possible clean-up site, consider the following factors:
  - Is the site safe (please consider stream bank slopes, water depth and velocity)?
  - Is the site accessible to volunteers (easy to enter and exit)?
  - What was the site used for in the past?
  - Is the site too large for a single clean-up? Should several clean-ups be considered?
  - What types of trash or debris are present?
  - Are there sensitive areas that should be treated with care?
  - Are there hazardous substances present that make a stream unsuitable for a clean-up by volunteers?
  - Remember that written permission must be obtained from property owners if the site is within private property. York County staff is available to assist groups in determining property owners and negotiating Access Agreements.

4. When an organization commits to the Adopt-A-Stream program and has a site approved by York County, an *Application for Local Program Designation and Agreement (Form A)* shall be completed and returned to the York County Planning & Development Department.

### Stream Clean-up Preparation Conditions

1. Select a date for the organization's clean-up event. Avoid holiday weekends, and schedule clean-up events during daylight hours.
2. Two weeks prior to the clean up event, contact the York County Environmental Compliance Coordinator to inform the County of the scheduled date so that the County may provide the organization with supplies (safety vests, gloves, safety information, support, maps and bags). Please return the vests to York County upon completion and save any gloves and bags for the next event.
3. One week prior to the scheduled event, the Designated Representative for the adopting group must send a copy of the *Informed Consent; Liability and Hold Harmless; Publicity Permission (Form C)* signed by each volunteer participating in the event.
4. Adopting group participants shall not trespass on private property. Groups must obtain written permission from any affected property owners before the scheduled clean-up date (a sample permission agreement can be found as **Form B** in this manual). Please retain a copy of this written permission during the clean up event and provide a copy to York County.

### Stream Clean-up Event Day Conditions

1. On the day of the event, participants should meet at a central meeting location that is free from traffic to discuss the plan and review the safety guidelines. Park vehicles legally and safely and obtain permission prior to parking on private property.
2. The designated representative must review the safety guidelines with all of the participants and identify any known hazards before beginning the clean-up event. All participants are required to obey the *Adopt-A-Stream Safety Guidelines* found in Section 4 of this document.
3. The adopting group is responsible for cleaning litter on both sides of the stream, including the upland areas (areas adjacent to the stream). It only takes a short time for any trash found anywhere within the watershed to wind up in the stream.
4. All trash should be bagged, with the exception of larger debris (e.g., tires, appliances, etc.) and staged in a location along a nearby road. Upon completion of the event, please call the York County Environmental Compliance Outreach Coordinator (803-909-7136)

and leave a message describing the location of the staged trash (please be specific) so that it can be scheduled for pick up.

5. Within one week following the clean-up event, organizations should complete the *Adopt-A-Stream Field Data Sheet (Form D)*. Adopting groups are encouraged to survey their stream section for signs of pollution and illegal dumping. Citizen reporting is often the only way illegal discharges and dumping are ever discovered.
6. After the first clean-up event has been completed, and the Environmental Compliance Coordinator has received all of the necessary forms (Application for Local Program Designation and Agreement, Informed Consent; Liability and Hold Harmless; Publicity Permission (signed by all participants), and the Field Data Sheet) the Adopting Group will be awarded an Adopt-A-Stream sign.

### 3. Storm Drain Stenciling Program (Optional)

#### Why Stencil Storm Drains?

There are still many citizens who do not understand the connection between community storm drains (the drains found along the side of the road or within your lawn that carry accumulated rainwater directly to our streams and lakes) and local streams, rivers, and lakes. Citizens mistakenly believe that storm drains carry waste to be treated prior to being discharged into York County's waterways. Stenciling storm drains as a reminder of the connection between streets and nearby waters is a direct and cost-effective project that a community can do to significantly decrease the amount of waste materials routinely dumped into these drains.



Figure 1: Typical Storm Drain Stencil

Community-based volunteer storm drain stenciling projects offer an educational pollution prevention activity with a lasting effect. Storm drain stenciling is a practical, positive, and easy first step toward public education, involvement, and support. Stenciled storm drains will raise citizen awareness and educate the public about stormwater runoff and the pollution sources associated with it. The stencils consist of a plastic marker, similar to the graphic found on this page that is fastened to the storm drains reminding people not to dump and why.

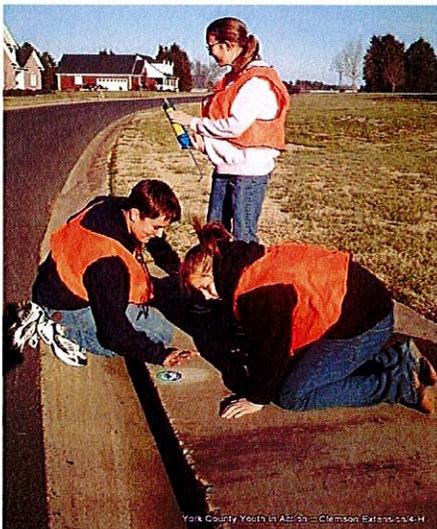


Figure 2: Students placing a stencil

As an Adopting Group, you may want to stencil the storm drains that empty into your stream segment to help further improve the water quality of your adopted stream. If there are no storm drains that empty into your section, you may choose another location for storm drain stenciling.

Individuals and groups not participating in the Adopt-A-Stream program may also participate in the storm drain stenciling program. Storm drain stenciling is a great way for Girl and Boy Scouts to earn conservation badges, for

2009-10-05: Adopt-a-Stream Policy – Approved by County Council

homeowner associations to mingle with neighbors in their community while protecting water quality at the same time, for educators to teach natural resource conservation while performing community service, and so on.

## Storm Drain Stenciling Guidelines

1. Determine the area and size of your project (the number of catch basins) and where the drains empty. Is it a lake, creek, river or wetland area?
2. Contact the York County Environmental Compliance Coordinator to discuss the project and obtain the materials and supplies to complete the work.
3. York County will provide the group with the necessary supplies to complete the project
  - Wire Brush – used to clean the area before applying the marker
  - The storm drain marker – there may be several available styles
  - Adhesive – used to apply the storm drain marker
  - Caulking Gun – used to apply the adhesive
  - Door Hangers – Information to be distributed to all area residences informing them of your efforts and giving them guidelines on how to protect the water quality.
  - Maps depicting locations of the stormwater collection system pipes and structures in the area.
  - Safety Vests
  - First Aid Kit

All Supplies are to be returned to York County when the stenciling project has been completed.

4. Upon completion, groups should submit correspondence to York County detailing the location of the storm drain stenciling project and the number of storm drains labeled. The stormwater collection system maps provided by York County can be marked to show the work completed.

## 4. Adopt-A-Stream Safety Guidelines

### **All Volunteers Must:**

- Wear the provided orange safety vest
- Park all vehicles clear of the roadway and on the same side of the road where volunteers are working
- Children must be accompanied by an adult
- Complete clean-ups and stenciling only during daylight hours
- Conduct a safety meeting for all participants prior to each clean-up and go over the *Safety Procedures for Waterway Clean-ups*.
- Obey all safety rules and guidelines

### **For Your Safety:**

- Wear light colored clothing that covers the arms and legs
- Wear leather boots or hip waders that are comfortable and waterproof
- Wear plastic coated gloves provided by your Adopt-A-Stream Coordinator
- Wear clothing that will not impair vision or movement during clean-up activities
- Always work in groups of two or more
- Stay clear of any construction activities
- Stop work in inclement weather
- Postpone clean-ups until 72 hours after any storm event
- Wear flotation devices in areas of deep water or fast moving current
- During warm weather months, drink plenty of fluids, take breaks, avoid overexertion
- During cold weather months, dress warmly with layered clothing
- Be alert for snakes, stinging insects, and poisonous plants
- Do not remove hazardous substances or dead animals (notify the York County Environmental Compliance Coordinator and tell him/her the location of the item)
- Avoid contact with noxious weeds and areas where herbicides have been applied
- Carpool to the site to reduce the number of vehicles
- Use proper lifting and bending techniques (lift with your legs, not with your back)
- Do not enter fast moving waters
- Do not drink the water from the stream

### **Volunteers Must Not:**

- Use or possess illegal drugs or alcohol during a clean-up
- Pick up what appears to be hazardous material
- Attempt to pick up objects which may be too heavy to move
- Attempt to squeeze bags to make room for more trash (injuries can result from broken or jagged objects)

### **In Case of Emergency:**

- Have at least one adequately stocked first-aid kit available
- Have cell phones available as well as a list of emergency numbers
- Select an emergency room/hospital near your work area and know the route to the designated treatment facility
- Have transportation immediately available

# SECTION 5 FORMS

# Adopt-A-Stream

## Application for Local Program Designation and Agreement

As stewards of York County's water resources, we the members of \_\_\_\_\_ request permission to adopt a \_\_\_\_\_ mile segment of \_\_\_\_\_, located in the \_\_\_\_\_ watershed.

Name of Adopting Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of stream clean-ups per year (two required): \_\_\_\_\_

Designated Representative (**Primary**): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (daytime): \_\_\_\_\_

Designated Representative (**Secondary**): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (daytime): \_\_\_\_\_

*The work will be performed under and in accordance with the York County Environmental Compliance Division's Adopt-A-Stream General Program Conditions and Safety Guidelines both attached to this application and incorporated herein by reference.*

*Applicants to whom an Adopt-A-Stream Program Designation and Agreement are issued shall at all times indemnify and save harmless York County Government and all of its employees, agents, and officers, from responsibility, damage, or liability arising from the exercise of the privileges granted under designated programs. The program Designation and Agreement may be terminated by York County Government at any time. York County Government reserves the right to revise or discontinue the Adopt-A-Stream Program at any time.*

*As a designated representative of \_\_\_\_\_*

*I have read, understand, and shall comply with the Adopt-A-Stream General Program Conditions and Safety Guidelines regarding participation in the program.*

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grant of Permission to Enter Upon or Cross Over Private Property**  
YORK COUNTY (SC) GOVERNMENT - ADOPT-A-STREAM PROGRAM

I, \_\_\_\_\_, give permission to  
(Printed Name of Property Owner)

\_\_\_\_\_, and its volunteers  
(Printed Name of Company/Organization)

and/or employees to enter upon or cross over my property for the purpose of cleaning the stream and the area adjacent to the stream per the York County, SC Adopt-A-Stream Program. I will permit the above-mentioned group to enter my property two times per year for the purpose of cleaning the stream and its banks.

I understand that the Company/Organization agrees to only enter my property for the purposes of the Adopt-A-Stream program and will abide by any Special Instructions that I have outlined below.

I will not be held responsible for any injury or damage to the person(s) and their belongings while they are on my property.

I understand that I have the right to cancel this agreement at any time providing I give ten days written notice to the Company/Organization.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# York County, South Carolina Adopt-A-Stream Program

---

## ***Informed Consent; Liability and Hold Harmless; Publicity Permission***

*Note: All Adopt-A-Stream clean up participants and/or stenciling participants must sign this form. Signature of a parent or guardian is required if participant is less than (18) years of age.*

Name of adopting group: \_\_\_\_\_ Stream Segment \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that on one or more occasions I (my child) will be performing stream clean-up work as part of the County sponsored Adopt-A-Stream program. Said work will be performed with the support and direction of the above-mentioned Adopting Group participating in the Adopt-A-Stream program. I have read, and am familiar with, the Adopt-A-Stream General Program Conditions and Safety Guidelines provided to me by the Adopting Group, and agree to comply with said conditions and guidelines. I understand that stream clean-up activities have a potential risk of injury. I agree that I (my child) will only perform those activities that I am (my child is) capable of doing and able to do, and I acknowledge and assume the risks of all such activities. I understand that participation in stream clean-up activities is strictly voluntary and that I (my child) may cease the volunteer activity at any time.

I agree that I will not hold the Adopting Group or York County Government or any of its agents, officers, employees, or representatives responsible for any damage or injury to me (my child) or my (my child's) property as a result of my (my child's) volunteer participation in the Adopt-A-Stream program. I further agree to release, indemnify and hold harmless the Adopting Group and York County Government and all of its agents, officers, employees, representatives, successors and assigns from any and all damages, claims and/or liability arising out of my (my child's) activities as a volunteer stream clean-up participant in the Adopt-A-Stream program.

I give permission to York County Environmental Compliance Division to include me (my child) in any video productions or photographs that are made to document or publicize the Adopt-A-Stream activities.

**Name (Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent or Guardian**

**(if participant is less than 18 years of age):** \_\_\_\_\_

**York County Environmental Compliance  
Adopt-A-Stream Field Data Sheet**

Group Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Stream Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tributary: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of stream section cleaned (if possible please provide names of road crossings and/or attach a map): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number of miles cleaned: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of participants, Adults: \_\_\_\_\_ Children: \_\_\_\_\_

**Trash Collected**

Number of trash bags collected: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of large items: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated pounds: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of trash collected: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Location of bagged trash/debris (Please contact the York County Planning & Development Department at 803-909-7136 immediately so that trash pick-up can be scheduled): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Physical Stream Data**

Water Appearance (circle): clear muddy grey/black green/algae oily foamy scummy

Stream Bottom (circle): rocky sandy silty other

Odor (circle): none musky/organic rotten eggs chemical gas/oil other

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Possible Illicit/Improper Discharge (please make note of any pipe which flows into the stream during dry weather as this may be an indication of an improper discharge): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_