



## **Residential Working Group Fact Sheet**

### **Carter Run, Great Run, Thumb Run and Deep Run TMDL Implementation Plan**

**Why Do A TMDL Implementation Plan (IP)?** A TMDL IP is a requirement of Virginia’s 1997 Water Quality Monitoring, Information, and Restoration Act, which directs the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to “develop and implement a plan to achieve fully supporting status for impaired waters”. By developing an IP, a community has a better opportunity to receive state and federal grant funds and even other sources of funding to restore water quality.

**How Can I Participate?** The primary means of public participation in this TMDL IP process will be through one of three working groups; agricultural, residential and government. The working groups provide citizens a venue for active participation in the planning process. Each working group will report its results and suggestions to the steering committee for consideration to be included in the TMDL IP document. Strong public participation in these groups ensures a final implementation plan driven by local input and concerns.

**What will the Residential Working Group Address?** The Residential Working Group will focus on human sources of bacteria in the impaired streams to include failing septic systems, uncontrolled discharges of human sewage into streams (straight pipes) and pet waste. Bacterial source tracking (BST) results confirm that human sources are a source of bacteria in the watersheds. Implementation of the residential bacteria reductions will consist of septic system repair and replacement, and elimination of straight pipes. The principle objective of the residential working group is to identify obstacles to implementation of residential bacteria load reductions and practical solutions to these obstacles. The group will focus on the following tasks:

1. Ways to identify and eliminate straight pipes from dwellings and businesses
2. Identify ways to manage the disposal of pet waste
3. Identify difficulties faced by landowners in correcting these problems
4. Identify potential means of funding corrections

5. Determine how to get landowners to come forward when there may be a fear of regulatory action and unknown costs
6. Evaluate technical assistance needed and how to administer assistance
7. Determine educational tools that are most likely to help

**Who Makes up the Residential Working Group?** Residential working groups typically consist of individual homeowners, local citizens organizations, and local and state agency representatives.

### **Comments/Questions raised in previous Residential Working Groups**

- Most people don't know that they should pump-out their septic tank every 5 years.
- How is the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act pump-out requirement handled in our locality?
- Educational programs should include description of proper maintenance of septic systems and the economic advantages associated with proper maintenance.
- There may be problems addressing owners of rented property.
- Failed septic systems and straight pipes can be identified through stream walks, stream assessment using canoes, and GIS analysis of residential maps and data layers considering the age of homes and specific information from VDH septic system inspections.
- Organizing volunteers for stream walks and stream assessments is essential.
- What educational materials are available on septic systems that may be useful for the implementation project?
- Who should direct the residential BMP implementation efforts?
- How to address other homeowner problems that may have to be corrected in order to remove straight pipes (*e.g.*, plumbing)? Are there sources of funds for these situations?
- Is the use of sewer hook-ups to correct straight pipes and failing septic systems feasible?
- How to address disposal of pet waste in rural communities?