

CURRENTS

Enviroscape Models Common Stormwater Challenges



PWSA's Enviroscape Watershed model

The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA) partnered with the Winchester Thurston School to present 3 exciting and interactive summer camp learning experiences for 2nd – 5th graders at the Allegheny RiverTrail Park in Aspinwall.

Over 100 campers took part in a hands-on demonstration of our Enviroscape Watershed model as part of Water Wednesdays, a themed day of camp. The Enviroscape model is a 3D

depiction of a watershed, complete with miniature houses, streams, a river and even a tiny water treatment facility.

Students can add sources of pollution to the model ranging from excess fertilizer applied in the neighborhood to oil leaking from a parked car to sewage entering the stream from an overburdened combined sewer outfall. Students observed the calamity as they enthusiastically pointed their spray bottles

at the model to emulate a rainstorm. The colorful pollution sprinkled throughout the town visibly accumulated in the model's river and we lamented the fate of the little plastic fish that must live in those waters.

The students were then prompted to consider what could be done by starting differently and repeating the demonstration. Fewer fertilizers and pesticides were added, mini rain gardens and riparian

Next Board Meeting: August 25

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buffers were set in place and combined sewers were separated along with other interventions. The result, as the students excitedly initiated the next rainstorm, was a much cleaner river and happier fish!

The model offered participants tangible examples of everyday actions which can impact water quality and our local stormwater systems. Such a highly interactive model makes the connection between the state of the water and the choices made throughout the town easy to conceptualize.

The location of the summer camp, Allegheny RiverTrail Park, is a mere half a mile away from PWSA's water treatment plant and offered an opportunity to discuss its day-to-day operations as well as the ecology of our source waters, the Allegheny River.

The Enviroscape effectively demonstrates the stormwater challenges we face here in Pittsburgh. If you could start differently, what changes would you make to better manage stormwater, protect the environment, and improve water quality?

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Additional Stormwater Resources

Explore the resources below for additional information about the stormwater fee, the stormwater credit program, and a searchable map to understand the amount of hard surface on your property.

Stormwater Credit Program: Property owners choosing to manage stormwater on site may reduce their monthly stormwater charge by installing stormwater management systems such as a rain garden or an underground stormwater system on their property. For information about the stormwater credit and to apply visit pgh2o.com/stormwater-fee.

Fee Finder Website: Use our searchable map to view the amount of impervious surface on your property and understand your stormwater fee. To use the site:

- Launch the [Fee Finder Website](#)
- Enter your address in the search bar and press enter
- Click inside the boundaries of your property for the amount of impervious surface and Equivalent Residential Units (ERU's)
- To determine your fee amount, multiply the number of ERU's by the current stormwater rate and subtract any credits that may apply

Disputing Stormwater Fee: If you have questions about the amount of impervious surface calculated for your property or believe there is a discrepancy, please contact our Customer Service department by calling 412-255-2423 (Press 5), to start the process.

Questions: Please call PWSA Customer Service at [412-255-2423 \(Press 5\)](tel:412-255-2423) or email info@pgh2o.com for questions about the stormwater fee or general questions about the credit program. For more information about our plans to manage stormwater, please visit pgh2ostormwater.com.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Your donation to PWSA's Hardship Grant Program will directly benefit PWSA customers having difficulty paying their bill. Donate online at pgh2o.com/give.

Enroll in eBilling

Convenient and easy to use, our online billing and payment portal ensures timely delivery of bills and payments. Visit pgh2o.com/ebilling to enroll.

Penn Liberty Plaza 1
1200 Penn Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Customer Service*

T 412.255.2423 (Press 5)
info@pgh2o.com

**translation services available*

Emergency Dispatch*

412.255.2423 (Press 1)
Available 24/7

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WATER WISE

Become a Sewer Superhero!



Pittsburgh has more than 25,000 storm drains that direct stormwater from streets and paths into underground sewer pipes. When functioning properly, sewers provide Pittsburghers with crucial public health benefits. However, some people have gotten in the habit of putting things into storm drains that don't belong in our sewers.

These materials can clog our pipes, cause flooding and basement backups, and pollute our streams and rivers – all of which have a negative and costly impact on our infrastructure and the environment. Help keep sewers flowing properly:

- Only rain down the drain! Never dump vehicle fluids, grass clippings, leaves, trash, or other materials into storm drains.
- Report illegal dumping of concrete, asphalt, paint, or other materials into storm drains. Call our 24/7 Dispatch at 412-255-2423 (Press 1) and note the license plate or company name if possible.
- Be a Gratekeeper! Sign up at alleghenycleanways.org/getinvolved to learn about clean up events and keeping the storm drains clean in your neighborhood.
- Report broken or clogged storm drains. Call our 24/7 Dispatch, contact us @pgh2o on Twitter, or fill out the form at Pgh2o.com/report-an-issue so that we can send a crew out.

Learn more at Pgh2o.com/reducing-stormwater-pollution.