

**Washtenaw  
County**

# Water Resources Commissioner Annual Report

Through  
December 31, 2014



The voters of Washtenaw County elected the Water Resources Commissioner to a four-year term on a partisan ballot in the 2012 general November election. Water Resources Commissioner Evan Pratt began his first term in 2013.

The Water Resources Commissioner (WRC) coordinates stormwater management, develops strategies for flood and erosion control, and participates in the development of related stormwater and land use policies, plans, and programs. He also conducts activities to protect the quality of storm drains and waterways. In performing these duties, the office is involved in the following activities: spreading drain special assessments; maintaining court-set lake levels and constructing and maintaining associated facilities including dams and pumps; establishing standards and reviewing and approving plans and specifications for storm drainage projects; and managing and financing drain construction projects.



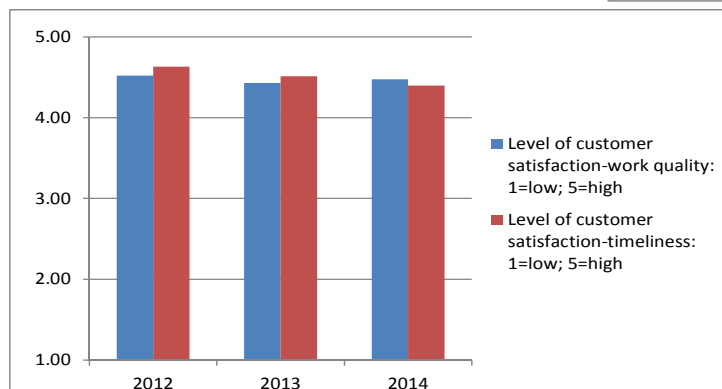
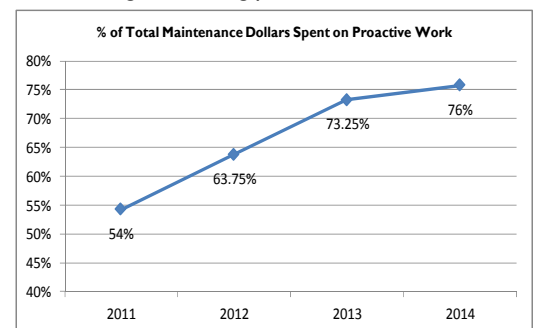
## Program Areas

- ◆ Permits and Design Standards
- ◆ Water Quality
- ◆ Soil Erosion
- ◆ Public Works
- ◆ Community Projects
- ◆ Special Assessments

In 2014, the Water Resources Commissioner released an updated version of what is now known as Rules and Guidelines, Procedures and Design Criteria for Stormwater Management Systems.

The office also includes the County Solid Waste Division and manages the Solid Waste Planning and diversion program county-wide.

Increasing cost-saving preventative maintenance



County drain service requests sustaining customer satisfaction

## Active Drain Projects

The Office of the Water Resources Commissioner (WCWRC), under the authority of the Michigan Drain Code (Act 40 of 1956), may receive petitions from Property Owners or Municipalities in order to construct new drains or to complete maintenance and improvement projects on existing drains. The WCWRC maintains and operates over 500 stormwater systems in Washtenaw County.

- Northfield Earhart Road, Northfield Twp
- Saginaw Hills, Scio & Lodi Twps
- West Branch of Augusta Central, Augusta Twp

See our website for project details.

The following Drain projects were funded in cooperation with the City of Ann Arbor:

- Allen Creek—Forest Ave.
- Allen Creek—Fourth Ave.
- Allen Creek—Madison Ave.
- Allen Creek—Miller Ave
- Allen Creek—West Park Fairgrounds
- Huron River Green Infrastructure
- Malletts Creek
- Traver Creek Leslie Park Golf Course



Below is a list of projects that started in or before 2014.

- Bazley Foster, Ypsilanti Twp
- Copper Meadows, Dexter Twp
- Geddes Ridge, Superior Twp
- Hawthorne Ridge, Pittsfield Twp
- Luella Burton Park, Scio Twp
- McMann Tile, Saline Twp

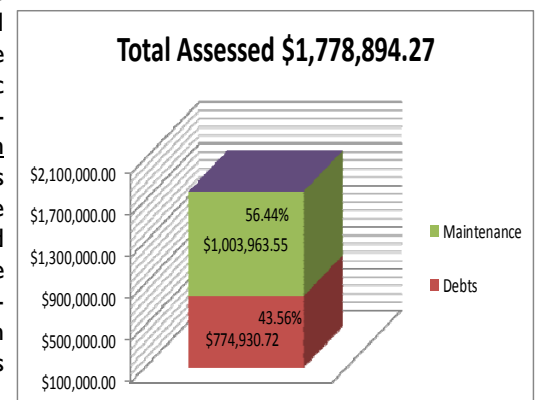
## Maintenance of County Storm Drains

The Water Resources Commissioner oversees an active and ongoing maintenance program to ensure that drains are cleaned and repaired in the early stages of physical deterioration. This ongoing routine maintenance is designed to reduce costs to the drainage districts for major cleanout and repair projects. This also prevents flooding. In December 2013, the Office of the Water Resources Commissioner applied for funding to transition current maintenance programs to an Asset Management approach to minimize long term taxpayer cost by creating maintenance plans similar to the scheduled maintenance plan for your vehicle. This effort is anticipated to take approximately three years to inventory, assess, and develop documented pro-active maintenance plans for as much of the nearly 700 miles of county drains as is practical.

- 63% of land in the County is in a Drainage District
- About 90% of County residents live in a Drainage District and rely on drainage
- There are currently 500+ Drainage Districts
- 146 drains were assessed in 2014, mostly maintenance, totaling \$1,778,894.27
- The majority of assessments are less than \$10.00 per parcel

## Drain Special Assessments

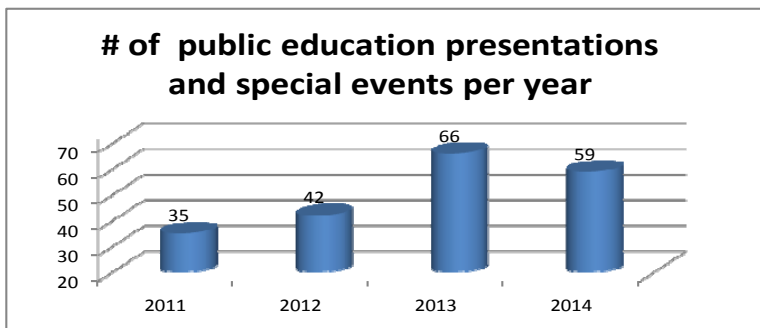
Drain construction and maintenance is financed by special assessments charged to three sources, the first are properties within the individual drainage districts. In most cases, a portion is charged at large to the local government(s) in which the district lies, for benefits to the public health. A third source is based on the acreage owned by the road agencies. In levying special assessments to properties in a district, the Drain Code requires that apportionment of costs by the Water Resources Commissioner must be based on the “benefit” received. The Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner has implemented procedures that base “benefit” on a number of factors including land use classifications, acreage in the drainage district, the actual work performed on the drain as it crosses individual properties, and Michigan Department of Transportation’s highway runoff formula assessing costs to state and county for highways and roads.



# WATER QUALITY PROGRAMS

## Community Partners for Clean Streams

The Community Partners for Clean Streams (CPCS) program is a voluntary, cooperative effort between the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office and Washtenaw County businesses, institutional landowners and multi-family residential complexes. The goal of the program is to help identify practical, cost effective ways to protect Washtenaw County waterways through pollution prevention. CPCS is a cost-free initiative that provides information, technical advice and recognition to participants as they self-assess how their daily site activities affect stormwater quality and consider best management practices to minimize pollutant discharge to our waterways.



## RiverSafe Homes Program

The RiverSafe Homes Program enables Washtenaw County residents to identify water quality protection activities they already do around their homes by completing an online or hard copy survey, and to commit to other pollution prevention activities they may not have considered before. The survey includes topics like "Home Toxics Disposal," "Yard Care and Outdoor Housekeeping," "Pet and Urban Wildlife Waste Disposal" and more. In return for completing the survey satisfactorily, respondents select a "RiverSafe Home" marker to place at a front door or other visible location. Through a partnership with the City of Ann Arbor, city residents that are RiverSafe Homeowners are eligible to receive a stormwater credit on their quarterly stormwater bills.



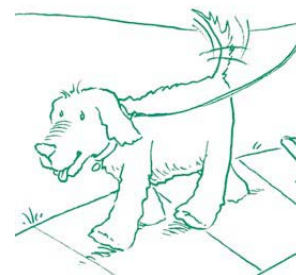
Home Toxics



Yard Care and Outdoor Housekeeping



Car and Vehicle Care



Pet and Urban Wildlife Waste Disposal

## Rain Gardens

Since 2005 more than 177 rain gardens have been designed and installed at residential, church, and institutional properties through this program. In 2014, 35 new gardens were constructed. The project was initiated as a Clean Water Act 319 grant but has since been funded by both the County and the City of Ann Arbor. An average of 10 gardens are constructed each year through the Rain Garden Assistance Program, and an average of 19 are built through the Master Rain Gardener training program. In the assistance program, design and one-on-one assistance with construction are provided. Master Rain Gardeners are trained to design and build rain gardens, and to serve as neighborhood educators.



# SOLID WASTE PROGRAMS



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EDUCATION

### Business Outreach Programs

- Waste Knot Program
- Environmental Excellence
- 3R Business Directory

### Community Outreach Programs

- Washtenaw Master Composter Class
- WCCSWM
- Issues of the Environment Radio Show
- Turning Trash Into Treasure Guide

### Festival Presence

- Ann Arbor Mayor's Green Fair
- Ypsilanti Heritage Festival
- University of Michigan Earthfest
- WCC Career Day
- Huron River Day
- Earth Fest

### Educational Solid Waste Presentations

- Thurston Elementary Green Team
- Washtenaw Conservation District Applied Pesticides Applicators—Clean Sweep Grant
- Washtenaw County Juvenile Detention Center



# ONGOING SOLID WASTE DIVERSION PROGRAMS - over 6,000 customers per year

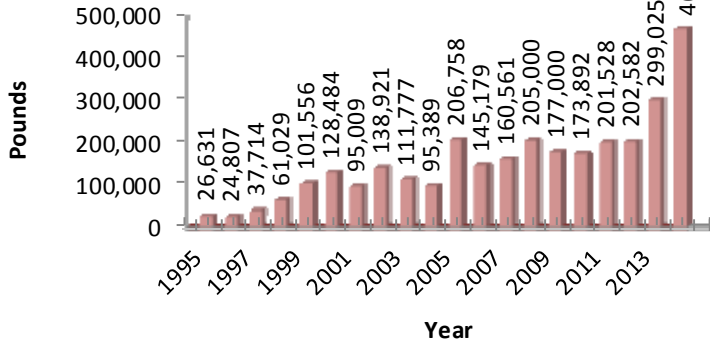
## Home Toxics Reduction Program

- ⇒ Latex Paint Recycling Program
- ⇒ Used Motor Oil Recycling Program
- ⇒ Pharmaceutical Take-Back
- ⇒ Shrink Wrap Recycling
- ⇒ Pesticides and other home toxics

## County Clean Up Days

- ⇒ Accept all of the above except pharma
- ⇒ Tires, bulk items (sofas mattresses)
- ⇒ Electronic waste

**Home Toxic Reduction Program (HTRP)  
Volumes, 1995-2014**

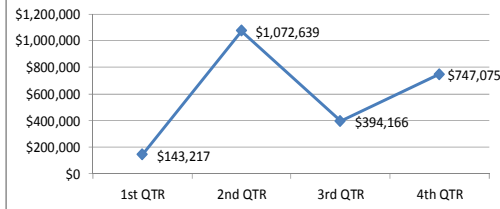


## Supplement water quality programs via grants, loans, and contract work

### City of Ann Arbor Projects

- ◆ Springwater Sub
- ◆ Rain Gardens
- ◆ SRF Project Plan
- ◆ Miller
- ◆ Forest
- ◆ Fourth
- ◆ LPGC,
- ◆ Trees

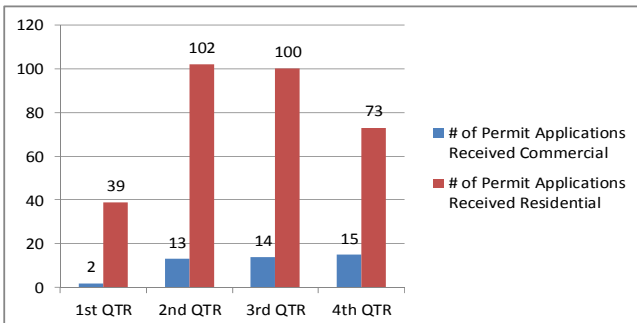
**Total Dollar Amount of Grant/Loan  
Funded Activity**



## Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control

Washtenaw County is mandated by the State of Michigan's Department of Natural Resources and Environment's, Part 91 Soil Erosion & Sedimentation Control of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, for administration and enforcement. The Washtenaw County Board of Commissioner has adopted the aforementioned Act and rules promulgated under the Act within the County's SESC Ordinance and administers the following twelve jurisdictions.

- |                |                |                   |
|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| City of Dexter | City of Saline | City of Ypsilanti |
| Augusta Twp.   | Lodi Twp.      | Northfield Twp.   |
| Salem Twp.     | Saline Twp.    | Scio Twp.         |
| Superior Twp.  | Webster Twp.   | York Twp.         |





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 P.O. Box 8645  
 Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8645

Phone: 734-222-6860  
 Fax: 734-222-6803

Water Resources Commissioner

Follow us on [Facebook](#)

*'Our mission is to provide for the health, safety and welfare of Washtenaw County citizens and the protection of surface water and the environment and to promote the long term environmental and economic sustainability of Washtenaw County by providing storm water management, flood control, development review and water quality programs.'*

We're on the Web!  
[drains.ewashtenaw.org](http://drains.ewashtenaw.org)

## Report flooding and other drainage issues online

Simply navigate to the **Customer Service Request** page at <http://gisapp.ewashtenaw.org/drainscsr/> and follow the instructions to locate the problem area on an interactive map. You will be asked to provide your contact information and a description of the problem; you may also upload a photograph. Often photographs are very helpful in locating the specific problem area and *showing*, rather than *telling*, our field staff what, exactly, is going on. Our administrative staff will contact you during regular business hours to obtain additional details and to inform you of whether a County Drain Inspector will be addressing your request or the information will be conveyed to the agency responsible for addressing it.

