

KENTUCKY WATER AWARENESS MONTH

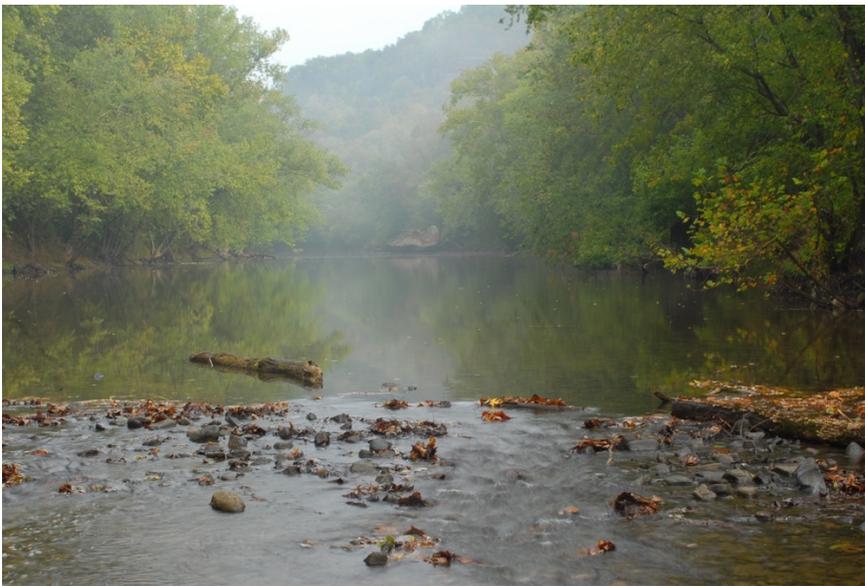
SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCES

MAY 2019

- 1st. Are you water aware? May is Water Awareness Month in Kentucky. This month we will be sharing information and ways you can conserve and protect Kentucky's water resources. Whether you like wading, swimming, fishing, or boating, or just relaxing by a stream, water is an important source of recreation. Tell us about your favorite water destination.

Agents: You can use the photo below of Rockcastle River or a photo of a favorite water destination in your county.

Photo courtesy: Tom Barnes and UK Forestry Natural Resources - Extension



- 2nd. We all live in a watershed. A watershed is an area of land that drains water to the same waterbody, like a stream. Do you know which Kentucky watershed you live in? Find out more about your watershed and the efforts to protect it [here](#).

Agent Resources:

YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUIAANVBYHM>

Extension Bulletins: <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/HENV/HENV206/HENV206.pdf>

<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/HENV/HENV204/HENV204.pdf>

Note to agents – the link is to the KY DOW site on watershed reports: <https://eec.ky.gov/Environmental-Protection/Water/Protection/TMDL/Pages/TMDL-HealthReports.aspx>

- 3rd. Water is an important resource for Kentucky. With almost 91,000 miles of rivers and streams it's an important resource to protect. We all need to do our part. **Get involved.** Join other volunteers across Kentucky doing citizen monitoring by adopting and monitoring a stream near you. To learn more visit [Watershed Watch](http://kywater.org) in Kentucky: <http://kywater.org> or the [Kentucky Water Watch](https://eec.ky.gov/Environmental-Protection/Water/Outreach/Pages/KentuckyWaterWatch.aspx) program: <https://eec.ky.gov/Environmental-Protection/Water/Outreach/Pages/KentuckyWaterWatch.aspx>

Photo credit: Kentucky River Watershed Watch, Watershed Watch volunteer in Letcher County



- 4th. Water quality in Kentucky's streams is impacted by runoff from land areas that surround them. Failing septic systems, pet waste, pesticides, fertilizers, automotive fluids, and litter can be washed directly into our streams or into storm drains which lead to our streams.

Photo courtesy of Amanda Gumbert, UK CAFE:



- 5th. When rain or snowmelt flows over surfaces such as rooftops, sidewalks, or driveways, it is called stormwater. As stormwater moves across lawns and paved areas, it picks up bacteria, nutrients, sediments, heavy metals, and chemicals before traveling through the storm sewers to our waterbodies. Because the stormwater is not cleaned or treated, it creates harmful conditions for the environment and for us. Photo credit: Ashley Osborne



Extension Bulletins:

<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/HENV/HENV203/HENV203.pdf>

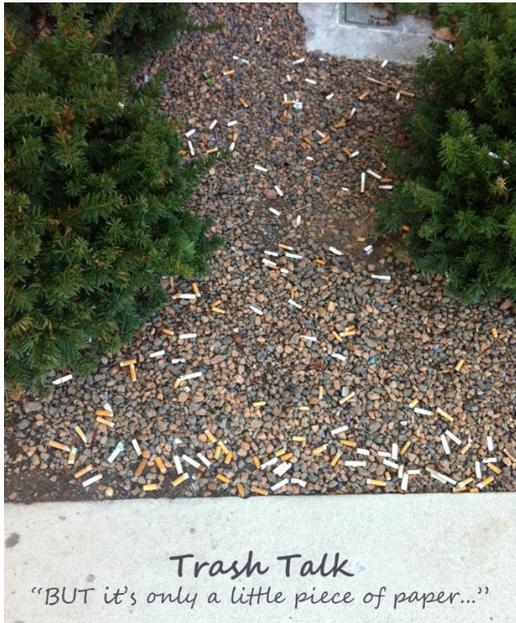
<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/aen/aen106/aen106.pdf>

- 6th. Are you thinking that it's time to apply fertilizer to your lawn? *Think again.* Spring nitrogen application on cool season grasses like Kentucky bluegrass and tall fescue can be detrimental. Waiting until fall will improve the health of your lawn, decrease spring mowing and reduce heat stress and other disease problems in summer. Remember, improperly timed fertilizer applications increase the risk for nutrient pollution in stormwater. Photo Credit: Gregg Munshaw



Spring is not the best time of the year to apply nitrogen

7th. If you are throwing your spent smokes on the ground you are trashing Kentucky, no buts about it. **Cigarette butts are litter.** In fact, they are the number one littered item in America. Rainwater washes them through stormwater systems and into our streams. Not only do they trash our state, most cigarette filters contain plastics which degrade slowly, polluting our waters.



8th. Pet waste can carry bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can wash into our streams and rivers, making them unsafe. It also adds excess nutrients to our waterways and contributes to harmful algal blooms. Pick up after your pet and dispose of the waste in the trash.



9th. Do you know that sediment is one of the main causes of pollution in Kentucky's streams? Sediment from soil erosion is harmful to aquatic life and habitats. Do your part to protect our soil and waters by planting or mulching areas where there is bare soil. Photo credit: Brad Lee



10th. Many people don't realize the issues associated with pollutants in stormwater and the impacts their actions have on water quality. Your community needs your help to educate them. **Get involved.** Many local governments have storm drain marking programs which are great opportunities for community service projects. These markers remind the public where stormwater flows and raise pollution prevention awareness.



- 11th. Soil testing is an easy and cost-effective way to determine how much fertilizer you need to apply to your lawn or garden. Over applying fertilizer can be hard on your pocketbook and our environment. The YouTube video shows step-by-step instructions on how to take a soil sample.



YouTube Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTIVnAyR_rw and/or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHQZ4xZAnCo>

Agent Information: Provide information and costs associated with county soil testing. E.g., “Soil sample bags are available at the Extension office. Soil sampling fees are <insert costs>.”

- 12th. Did you know that installing a rain barrel conserves valuable drinking water? Depending on your system and rainfall in your area, you could be capturing between 700 and 1,000 gallons per year. That’s enough water to fill around 30 small kiddie pools. A rain barrel captures some of the rainwater from your rooftop and stores it for later use on your lawn and flowerbeds. The DIY YouTube video shows how to construct a rain barrel from a used pickle barrel.

YouTube Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKC8wJU_Uvo

- 13th. Keep yard waste out of the storm drain. Grass clippings and leaves are a common source of nutrient pollution in stormwater.

Photo courtesy of Ashley Osborne, UK CAFE:



- 14th. Did you know that creating a no-mow zone next to your stream, pond, or lake improves water quality? Creating a buffer zone with plants, shrubs, and native grasses traps sediment and pollutants that run off the land, provides shade to reduce temperatures in streams, and creates habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Photo courtesy of Amanda Gumbert, UK CAFE:



Extension bulletins: <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/HENV/HENV202/HENV202.pdf> and <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/ip/ip73/ip73.pdf>

- 15th. There are many simple steps you can take in your landscape to reduce stormwater runoff. The goal is to slow runoff down and provide time for it to soak into the ground. One option is installing a raingarden. A raingarden is simply a garden designed to capture runoff and encourage infiltration. The mulch, plants, and soil trap sediment and pollutants from the runoff. Raingardens also provide habitat for birds, butterflies, and other wildlife.

Link to the Kentucky Division of Water website [here](#) for some more ideas.



Agent Resource:

Extension Bulletin: <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/HENV/HENV205/HENV205.pdf>

- 16th. How much water do you use a day? Some water bills provide an estimate of your daily use. If not, estimate it with the [water usage calculator](#) developed by the US Geological Survey. How low can you go? By making a few simple changes in your day-to-day actions you can decrease water usage. Take the 40 Gallon Challenge! Click on the website below and choose which practices you plan to do to save water.

Website: <http://www.40gallonchallenge.org/>

Extension Bulletin: <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/HENV/HENV601/HENV601.pdf>



- 17th. In the market for a new showerhead? Ready to replace your old toilet? Look for the WaterSense logo. The [WaterSense](#) program is sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to promote products such as toilets, showerheads, faucets, and faucet accessories that are water-efficient.

Website: <http://www3.epa.gov/watersense/index.html>

- 18th. How much water do leaky faucets waste? For a single-family home, those small drips add up to hundreds of gallons of fresh water wasted each year. This spring, take the time to check and fix leaky faucets. Use the [drip calculator](#) on the US Geological Survey website to see the impact some simple repairs can have on water savings.

Website: <https://water.usgs.gov/edu/activity-drip.html>



- 19th. Use good laundering techniques. To avoid rewashing or re-rinsing, pretreat stains, sort clothes, and follow product recommendations (such as stain removers, detergents, bleach, fabric softeners). Not only will it cut down on the time you spend doing laundry but you'll also save water and energy. For information on stain removal click on the link to the Extension bulletin below.

Extension Bulletins: <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/FCS2/FCS2840/FCS2840.pdf>

- 20th. Most Kentucky soils have plenty of phosphorus (P). In fact, many are so naturally rich in phosphorus that adding more increases the risk for polluting our waterways. Excess phosphorus promotes rapid and over abundant algae growth which disrupts ecosystems, harms wildlife, negatively impacts water recreation and may contain toxins that sicken people and pets. Conduct a soil test before applying fertilizer. When purchasing fertilizer look for "0" in the middle number.

Save Time. Save Money. Save the Environment.

No P On My Lawn!

Why we don't and you shouldn't either

Did you know?

- Phosphorus (P) is carried by stormwater from lawns to waterways.
- Excess P pollutes our waterways and promotes harmful algal blooms.
- Kentucky home landscapes can be managed with a P-free diet.

Proper lawn management practices can reduce P pollution.
Conduct a soil test before applying fertilizer.

 University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

- 21st. Have a question about how to properly dispose of an old T.V., unused paint, or leftover pesticide? Contact your Solid Waste Coordinator to find out about disposal and recycling opportunities. You might also visit Earth911. Remember to never dispose of hazardous waste down sinks, storm drains, or sinkholes.

Websites:

Earth911 - <http://search.earth911.com/>

Solid Waste Coordinators Contact Information – <https://eec.ky.gov/Environmental-Protection/Waste/recycling-and-local-assistance/Documents/Solid%20Waste%20Coordinators.pdf>

- 22nd. Did you know that mature trees provide many ecosystem services with economic benefits? They intercept thousands of gallons of stormwater and play an important role in lowering energy demands and improving air quality. Studies have also shown that mature trees provide health benefits by reducing stress levels and improving overall well-being. Help grow Kentucky's tree canopy. Participate in the Urban Forest Initiative's [Adopt-a-Tree Program](https://ufi.ca.uky.edu/adopt-a-tree) to learn more about trees in your community.



Website: <https://ufi.ca.uky.edu/adopt-a-tree>

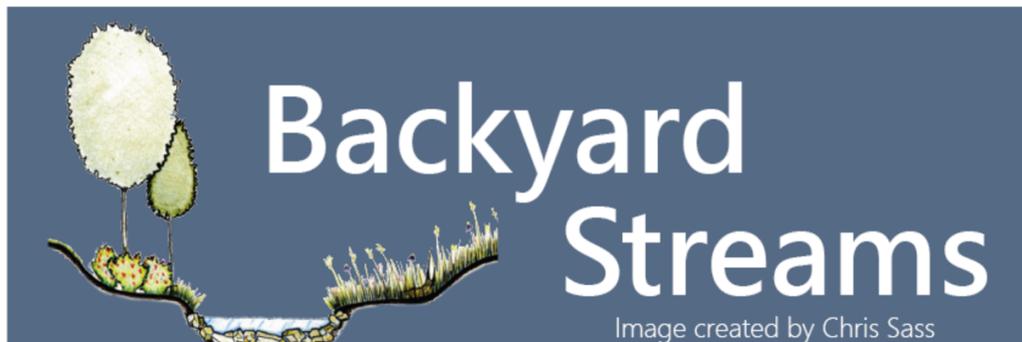
- 23rd. Do you know where your drinking water comes from? If you get your water from a public water supplier then figuring out where your drinking water comes from is an easy task. Public water suppliers are required to provide their customers with consumer confidence reports each year. The report includes information about the quality of your drinking water and the source of your drinking water, whether it be a groundwater source or a local surface water body.

Website: <http://ofmpub.epa.gov/apex/safewater/f?p=136:102>

- 24th. Do you have a stream running through your backyard or in your neighborhood? Are you wondering how to best care for it to protect your property and the stream's water quality? Consider becoming a **Certified Backyard Stream Steward**. This online course was developed by UK Extension Specialists to encourage stream stewardship. Find out more on the Backyard Streams website: <https://www.uky.edu/bae/backyardstreams>

View the videos and be inspired by stream transformations occurring in neighborhoods.

Link to YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=11&v=dkUkJ3cKnCc



25th. Do you have an up-to-date agriculture water quality plan? If you farm on ten acres or more you should. Information about the plan and how to complete or update one is available online or you can contact your county Extension office.

Website: <http://www.bae.uky.edu/awqpt/default.htm>

26th. Want to learn more about the importance and uniqueness of Kentucky's water resources? Listen to the "KYH2O" Podcast. From bugs and buffer zones to rocks and trees, episodes cover a variety of subjects impacting and associated with water resources and water quality. Podcasts are available through podcast apps, iTunes, or online at <https://kyh2o.podbean.com>.



27th. Are you hosting a Memorial Day cookout? Remember to thaw meat and other frozen foods in the refrigerator or use the defrost setting on your microwave instead of using running water. Don't wash or rinse dishes under a running faucet. And only run the dishwasher with a full load. The Extension factsheet below has more water saving tips for the kitchen and home.

Extension Bulletin: <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/HENV/HENV6o1/HENV6o1.pdf>