

The Resource

A Publication of the City of North Augusta
Stormwater Management Department

Is There a Stormwater Drain or Inlet in Your Yard?

The Stormwater Management Department's (SWMD) storm sewer survey and mapping program is now in its fourth year. We will continue mapping the system until complete. During previous surveys we located some stormwater inlets and pipes within yards of residents. This year, we are looking for more that are not visible from the street.

The storm sewer mapping is a requirement of the city's municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit.

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SWMD Seeking to Map

- grate or concrete inlets that can't be seen from the street
- systems that combine stormwater from several homes (usually located in a low lying area)
- pipes that are tied into the street storm sewer system
- pipes (other than French drains) that drain into streams or the river

If you have these types of devices in your yard, please call 803-441-4246 or email stormwater@northaugusta.net to notify us. Leave your name, address, location of the device, and a contact number. The SWMD can quickly determine if the device you are calling about is on our map. If not, we may need to come to your home to add it.

With Increased Outdoor Activity, Be Aware of Poison Ivy.

Most of us have experienced or known someone who is highly allergic to poison ivy. Now that we are all enjoying outside activities again, it is good to refresh our memory on what poison ivy looks like and spend a few minutes discussing it with the kids. Poison ivy is the major cause of allergic dermatitis in the southeast. Contact with the plant causes inflammation, blistering, and itching of the skin.

The plant sap contains a chemical called urushiol, which is found within ducts in the leaves, flowers, stems and roots of this weed. When poison ivy plants are damaged, this chemical is emitted onto the leaf and stem surfaces where humans and animals may come into contact with it. If you are allergic to poison ivy it is important to know the following facts.

- Only one nanogram (one billionth of a gram) of urushiol oil is needed to cause an allergic reaction in people that are susceptible.
- It would only take 1/4 ounce of urushiol oil to cause an allergic reaction in every person on earth.
- Up to 500 people can be affected from the amount of urushiol oil that would be needed to cover the head of a pin.
- Urushiol oil can stay active on surfaces for up to five years.
- Allergic reactions to poison ivy (like many allergens) may become a problem for people that have never had a reaction in the past.

Poison ivy plants have three leaves, can have berries or flowers, and the leaves can be shiny or dull depending on the age of the plant. The leaves are

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Meet North Augusta's SWMD Intern – April Miles



April Miles mapping a storm water outlet.

The city SWMD welcomes a new intern to the program. April Miles is a senior at USC-Aiken majoring in Biology and will be graduating May 10. Her goal for the future is to work in the environmental field. April will be working with the SWMD to continue mapping the stormwater drains, assist with storm drain marking, and conducting water quality monitoring and stream assessment activities. Over the next month or so, April will continue GPS mapping of the storm sewer system and with the yard inlet mapping.

A New Focus on Air Quality in the CSRA

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) along with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently held meetings in Augusta and Aiken to bring awareness to community leaders about air quality in the CSRA. The goal of these agencies is to provide outreach to local communities detailing simple ways to reduce air pollution. This increased focus on our area is a result of more stringent air quality regulations and local testing that indicates that our air does not meet these new standards. At the same time, the US Supreme Court ruled on April 4, 2007 that the EPA has not sufficiently enforced air quality regulations. The new rules along with the recent court ruling will

generate even further oversight of air quality across the country.

As explained by Myra Reece, SCDHEC Air Quality Bureau Chief, "the hope is that our communities will initiate simple voluntary programs that will cut back emissions of pollutants into the air." Through citizen education and more focused outreach efforts, the regulators expect to see improvement in air quality testing without the need to force communities to implement more costly measures. As part of North Augusta's efforts to be proactive, the SWMD will provide air quality information here and in future issues of the Resource so that each of us can do our part to reduce air pollution.

Types of Air Pollution:

Airborne particles like those in haze, smoke and airborne dust can present serious air quality problems and affect your health. Particle pollution is a mixture of microscopic solids and liquid droplets that are suspended in the air. The size of the particles is directly linked to health problems. Your lungs and heart can be affected by small particles that you breathe. Those at risk include people with heart or lung disease, older adults and children. Daily air quality and health information is available on the AIR NOW website at www.airnow.gov.

Ozone and greenhouse gases. According to SCDHEC, the United States has the highest per capita greenhouse gas emissions of any nation on earth. Being energy wise and reducing your use of energy can cut greenhouse gases tremendously. The three areas where you can help are home energy use, transportation, and by reducing waste through recycling and reusing. Learn more about energy saving at home and how to get tax credits for implementing less energy consuming methods at www.energystar.gov or visit www.homepower.com.

Noxious gases such as sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, and chemical vapors are also air pollutants. These can take part in further chemical reactions once they are in the atmosphere forming smog. Smog is caused primarily from chemical reactions with automobile exhaust and industrial emissions. Another source is gas powered lawn mowers. Learn more about air quality in SC at www.scdhec.gov/baq.

SPARE THE AIR!

Carpool with a friend. Walk or ride a bike to school.

Paint with a brush not a sprayer.

Don't idle your car in park.

Install storm doors.

Don't top off your gas tank.

Use energy efficient appliances.

Combine errands into one trip.

Store solvents in airtight containers.

Install energy efficient windows.

Keep your car tuned properly.

Turn off lights when you leave a room.

Conduct a home energy audit.

Diesel Equipment!

If you are the owner or operator of a fleet of diesel powered vehicles, consider contacting the Southeast Diesel Collaborative to learn more about reducing emissions from diesel engines at www.southeastdiesel.org. One estimate states that if 10-15 pieces of construction equipment are retrofitted with diesel particulate filters, approximately 22.84 tons of air pollution will be eliminated. Learn more about retrofit filters at www.epa.gov/otaq/retrofit/retrofittech.htm

RECYCLE! The Three R's

Did you know that if you reduce, reuse, and recycle, you can help prevent water and air pollution? Think about it. If you use less material daily, you generate less waste. Less waste means less garbage. Less garbage means less fuel burned in trucks. Less fuel burned in trucks, means less air pollution. Less air pollution, means less air deposited pollution into our creeks, rivers and streams. Also, the more you recycle and re-use,

the less materials manufacturers have to produce. This results in less consumption of oil, gas, and electricity by industry and less pollution. So the next time you think about throwing away a soda bottle or grabbing a paper plate or napkin instead of real plates and towels, think again! Recycle that soda bottle. Use products more than once. Preserve our natural resources.

REMINDER: As spring and summer gardening and mowing begin, please remember to place un-bagged yard waste up over the curb away from storm drains. If you bag yard clippings, they can be placed on the street for pickup as long as they do not block storm drain inlets. North Augusta now offers yard waste carts available for \$3.75 per month. Call 441-4219 if interested. Let's work together to keep the city storm drains and streams clear of clogging debris.

Poison Ivy

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shiny and reddish when they first start growing and become totally green and dull as they mature. The leaf edges can have notches or can be smooth. Edges are never serrated (shaped like saw blades). They can grow along the ground, climb, or look like small shrubs. Even in winter, the vines can be found twining and growing on trees with thousands of hairy looking roots holding them to the bark. These vines are still potent! Study the photos to get familiar with how poison ivy looks and share the information with your family. If you want more information, visit the poison ivy information center at www.poisonivy.aesir.com or visit www.poison-ivy.org where you can learn how to identify the plant and obtain poison ivy posters and identification cards.



Poison ivy vine.



Poison ivy growing up a tree.

Ivy Photo credits: www.poison-ivy.org



Poison Ivy

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS:

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event

**Saturday, May 19, 2007
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

Bring your hazardous household waste to the Kroger Shopping Center for proper disposal.

Clemson Extension Gardening/Landscaping Workshop

**Monday - June 11, 2007
7 - 9 p.m.**

North Augusta Community Center
Learn how to successfully manage your lawn and garden activities without harming the environment. Suzanne Holmes from Clemson Extension is the presenter. Call 441-4246 or email tstrickland@northaugusta.net to register.

North Augusta Streams & Creeks

**Saturday, July 21, 2007
3 - 5 p.m.**

North Augusta Community Center
Spend a couple of hours out of the July heat learning about our local streams. This family friendly seminar will be offered to residents (all ages) that want to learn more about North Augusta's watershed. It will be a two hour event from 3-5 p.m. Participants will learn about the quality of the streams, creeks, wetlands, and the river in North Augusta. We will also discuss the new brick pond nature park under construction. Residents interested in becoming environmental volunteers for North Augusta should attend. To register, call 441-4246 or email tstrickland@northaugusta.net.

Species profile:

Pond Slider *Trachemys scripta sp.*

During warm spring and summer days, it is common to see many basking slider turtles piled on top of protruding logs in ponds, wetlands, or at the river's edge. Approaching them instantly sends these creatures sliding back into their safe underwater world, hence the name "pond sliders". The pond slider turtles, *Trachemys scripta sp.*, consist of four subspecies, two of which, the red-eared slider and the yellow-bellied slider, are commonly seen in North Augusta. These freshwater reptiles are almost entirely aquatic, only climbing onto land for warming in the sun or to lay eggs. Since they are cold-blooded, most of their day is spent on rocks and logs sunbathing. They will sleep at night underwater, usually resting on the bottom. During cold winter temperatures, they will hibernate underwater.

Each female lays eggs (clutches) up to three times per year. She will travel to a suitable nesting site and will dig with her back feet until the nest is ready. She will lay up to 23 eggs in the nest. After she covers her eggs with soil, she will return to the water. Her young will hatch in two months. If it is the fall, they will stay in

the nest until warmer weather. Once they leave the nest, they instinctively head for the water to grow into adults.

Young slider turtles are brightly colored with yellow stripes and spots on their shell or on their underside. A red-eared slider has a red mark behind its eye and a yellow-bellied usually has a yellow mark in the same area. As they mature, the colors and marks on these turtles fade and older males can appear almost black. The young feed almost entirely on insects, snails, tadpoles and small fish. As they grow, they include more plants than animals in their diet. Slider turtles have webbed feet that help them swim. Males have long curved claws on each foot while females have short tipped claws. The males are usually smaller than females and have a much longer and thicker tail. Sliders can live up to 30 to 40 years.

Red-eared sliders were once the most popular turtle being sold as pets. In the 1960's and early 70's in the southeast, as many as 150 turtle farms began operating



An old male pond slider living in North Augusta

and exporting these creatures to all parts of the world. Some of these same farms are still operating and exporting adult sliders to Asia as food. It is estimated that 5-10 million turtles were exported around the world. Sometimes referred to as "dime store" turtles, very few of these turtles survived in captivity or were eventually released into the wild once they became too burdensome for their owners. Because of this, they are now listed as one of the most invasive species of turtle in the world. Since 1975, the sale of turtles under four-inches in size (2-3 years old) has been banned in the United States. To learn more about local aquatic turtles, visit the SWMD website at www.northaugusta.net.

Stormwater

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During the mapping process, we locate all city stormwater pipes, inlets and drains. Once we locate them, we plot them on an electronic map with global positioning system (GPS) equipment. Conducting the surveys and mapping the system allows us the opportunity to check for broken pipes or inlets. We can also determine the systems that need cleaning or require other types of repairs. The information is logged into our computer system to schedule

repairs. Once the process is complete, we will have a complete inventory of our storm sewer system and outfalls that discharge stormwater to the river.

The SWMD is particularly interested in finding older storm drains located within yards that may not be obvious to city workers. If you have a grate inlet for stormwater in your yard or other types of stormwater pipe that route stormwater to creeks or the city stormwater system, we would like to know about it. We have located several of these devices in the Crystal Lake Drive area and a few in the

Summerfield subdivision. Over the next few months we will be specifically looking for these types of devices.

We do not need to map french-drain systems (usually small plastic black perforated pipe) that just drain standing water or that come from gutters or downspouts. Also, we have mapped natural or manmade stormwater ditches located through or behind yards. If you have questions please contact us at the number or email listed on page one.



For additional information contact:

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