

Greater Lansing Regional Committee for Stormwater Management

Public Education Plan



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INTRODUCTION

The Public Education Plan (PEP) is being prepared for the communities of the Greater Lansing Regional Committee for Stormwater Management (GLRC) to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit requirements. This creates a concise document for members and the PEP Committee to work from throughout the permit cycle (2024-2027 varies by municipality).

The original PEP was completed in 2003, updated in 2006, 2010, 2013, 2018 and this current version of the PEP was submitted to the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) in the spring of 2024. The PEP was written for all GLRC members to guide the development and implementation of strategies aimed at educating the public on a regional and watershed level. However, each permittee will take their specific watershed and community characteristics into consideration throughout PEP implementation. Where applicable, each member has included their specific individual efforts throughout the PEP.

GLRC members participating in the PEP are as follows:

City of DeWitt	Lansing School District
City of East Lansing	Meridian Township
City of Grand Ledge	Clinton County Road Commission
City of Lansing	Clinton County
City of Mason	Eaton County
Delhi Charter Township	Ingham County
Delta Charter Township	Michigan State University
DeWitt Charter Township	Waverly Community Schools
Lansing Charter Township	

A. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURE – GLRC WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA

As required, permittees commit to keeping their Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) current and publicly available on their community website. Local public notice requirements will be met as appropriate, and both the SWMP and contact information will be provided to encourage public review. The public will be invited to participate in the implementation and periodic review of the SWMP, which will be accomplished through each community website and the GLRC website. When the progress reports are submitted to EGLE, they will be posted on the GLRC and community websites. This will update the public and invite them to participate or provide input related to the implementation of the SWMP if they choose to.

In addition, the PEP, progress reports and other appropriate supporting documents are posted on the GLRC website. The GLRC website serves as one of our strongest tools for information sharing with the public. All GLRC documents (template manuals, progress reports, implementation materials, brochures, quarterly newsletters, annual reports, etc.) are available on the GLRC website. The GLRC maintains a calendar that announces public meeting information, workshops, training opportunities, household hazardous waste collections, and other events.

The GLRC also recognizes the importance of social media. Our existing Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts help us to reach out to different demographics and reach larger audiences. By purchasing Meta’s “boosted posts”, the GLRC can geographically target the audiences within the urbanized zone and ensure consistent messaging to the residents of all GLRC jurisdictions. The GLRC will continue to annually support the purchase of paid posts from Meta and track the results using social media analytics. Social media has proven to be an effective tool for outreach communication, and the responsibility of creating and sharing content related to the required topic areas is the GLRC Coordinator’s, indicated by the “social media” delivery mechanism in Section D.

B. EVALUATION AND PRIORITIZATION PROCEDURES

The GLRC first conducted a water quality survey of residents during the fall of 2006. The purpose of the survey was to provide a benchmark to gauge the effectiveness of regional and local public outreach campaigns on water quality issues in the Greater Lansing region. The survey results provided a baseline for evaluating the effectiveness of regional and local water quality initiatives over time. These results have been used by the GLRC and other organizations in the region to prioritize and implement public education programs through the most effective and efficient methods possible.

The 2006 survey results can be found here:

[Greater Lansing Regional Water Quality Survey Findings Report 2006](#)

Since a baseline for evaluating the effectiveness of current (and past) water quality initiatives was completed in 2006, the GLRC committed to conducting the survey again in 2012 to identify successes related to the ongoing public education efforts and areas for improvement. The 2012 survey was conducted in the exact same manner as the 2006 survey; both statistically valid surveys ensure the GLRC is effective and efficient in our public education efforts. Additionally, the 2012 survey provided comparative data with the previous survey.

The 2012 survey results can be found here:

[Greater Lansing Regional Water Quality Survey Findings Report 2012](#)

The GLRC PEP Committee conducted another follow up survey in 2018. The survey was conducted in the same manner as the 2006 and 2012 surveys, and was used to evaluate successes, challenges and to determine the overall effectiveness of the PEP. The Findings Report included further comparative data with the 2006 and 2012 surveys.

The 2018 survey results can be found here:

[Greater Lansing Regional Water Quality Survey Findings Report 2018](#)

In 2023, the PEP Committee committed again to contracting with a firm to conduct another statistically valid survey of residents within the Looking Glass River, Red Cedar River, and Grand River urbanized watersheds. The resulting 2024 survey results indicate the GLRC is meeting its goals of informing citizens of personal actions they can take to reduce stormwater pollution and changing behaviors to improve water quality. A public presentation of the Survey Findings Report was held on March 11, 2024, to which partners in stormwater management and water quality protection were invited from throughout the tri-county region.

The 2024 survey results can be found here:

[Greater Lansing Regional Water Quality Education Survey Findings Report 2024](#)

The PEP Committee met in March 2024 after the survey results were released to evaluate the new findings and discuss how the new data could help us further educate the public and improve our reach during the next permit cycle. GLRC remains committed to evaluating the effectiveness of our outreach and adapting as needed. Evaluation mechanisms are essential to gauge implementation status and assess the effectiveness of the overall program. Identification of quantifiable measures provides both measurability and accountability within the program.

The PEP Committee will continue exploring options for assessing PEP effectiveness in the new permit cycle, including but not limited to a duplicate of the previous surveys or the utilization of an online survey. An evaluation of the best option will be completed by the end of the permit cycle, scheduled for October 2027. If a duplicate of previous surveys is the chosen option, the next survey would be completed in 2030 to match previous survey timelines as approved by EGLE.

Based on the survey results, the PEP Committee completed a prioritization and categorized educational topics as high, medium, and low priorities. The Committee also considered the available resources, cost-effective outreach methods, existing public knowledge levels, and potential collaboration with other programs and agencies. Examples of High priority topics areas are:

B. Inform and educate the public about the connection of the MS4 to area waterbodies and potential impacts discharges have on surface waters;

C. Promote proper disposal practices for grass clippings, leaf litter, and animal wastes that may enter into the MS4;

E. Inform and educate the public on proper application and disposal of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers;

I. Educate the public on, and promote the benefits of, green infrastructure and low impact development.

The GLRC will report on the measurable goals achieved during the regular Progress Report submissions. Throughout the permit cycle, the PEP Committee will meet to discuss the progress of ongoing activities, review current priorities, track measurable goals, and explore new educational opportunities using the survey results.

The GLRC also continues to work with several partners in the larger surrounding area to accomplish a variety of public education efforts including the Middle Grand River Organization of Watersheds, conservation districts, and local watershed groups to develop consistent, meaningful public education messages and delivery mechanisms that will benefit the entire region. This effort has and will continue to incorporate the GLRC survey results and other available survey results in the region. The GLRC is confident that our collaborative and individual PEP accomplishments and efforts will continue to be successful, and we will work in the most effective, efficient way possible.

C. REQUIRED TOPIC AREAS

The PEP follows the format recommended by EGLE and includes the ten topic areas required in the permit.

An adequate PEP will implement a sufficient amount of educational activities to ensure that the targeted audiences are reached with the appropriate message(s) for the following topics:

- (A) Promote public responsibility and stewardship in the applicant's watershed(s).*
- (B) Inform and educate the public about the connection of the MS4 to area waterbodies and the potential impacts discharges could have on surface waters of the state.*
- (C) Educate the public on illicit discharges and promote public reporting of illicit discharges and improper disposal of materials into the MS4.*
- (D) Promote preferred cleaning materials and procedures for car, pavement, and power washing.*
- (E) Inform and educate the public on proper application and disposal of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers.*
- (F) Promote proper disposal practices for grass clippings, leaf litter, and animal wastes that may enter into the MS4.*
- (G) Identify and promote the availability, location, and requirements of facilities for collection or disposal of household hazardous waste, travel trailer sanitary wastes, chemicals, yard wastes, and motor vehicle fluids.*
- (H) Inform and educate the public on proper septic system care and maintenance, and how to recognize system failure.*
- (I) Educate the public on, and promote the benefits of, green infrastructure and Low Impact Development.*
- (J) Identify and educate commercial, industrial, and institutional entities likely to contribute pollutants to stormwater runoff.*

D. PUBLIC EDUCATION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Activities listed here correspond directly with the ten topic areas A - J for compliance. The following details the shared and permittee-specific BMPs proposed to meet the required PEP topics.

(A) Promote public responsibility and stewardship in the applicant's watershed(s).

Activity: Continue to maintain watershed signage at road and river crossings, add visual representations of educational messages in a public area(s) as opportunities allow.

Corresponding topic areas: A, B

Priority: High

Target audience: Public

Key message: Promoting local water resources, connecting the public to their surrounding environment; improving public knowledge of human impacts upon that environment through stormwater runoff from nonpoint sources.

Delivery mechanism: Passing vehicles, people biking, walking, or running will view the signs and educational messages.

Year and frequency of implementation: Signs reading “You are in the Grand River, Looking Glass, or Red Cedar River Watershed” were originally posted between 2005 -2006. They will be maintained indefinitely with help from the local road commissions and communities.

Responsible party: Communities maintain road signs; GLRC Coordinator works to expand visual representations of educational messages and promote any new location(s) on social media.

Evaluation: Indicate that the signs are still there in Progress Reports; website and social media analytics on new educational messages.



Activity: Use “Do you know your watershed?” brochure and update as appropriate.

Corresponding topic area: B

Priority: Medium

Target audience: Public

Key message: The brochure educates the public about what a watershed is, our local watersheds, urban watersheds, and how to protect our waters.

Delivery mechanism: Posted on the GLRC website, handed out at public events.

Year and frequency of implementation: The brochure will be used at all public events (such as Quiet Water Symposium, MSU Science Festival, Adopt-A-River, Green Fairs, etc.); updated in 2024.

Responsible party: PEP Committee, GLRC Coordinator, and GLRC communities.

Evaluation: Number of brochures provided throughout the year and website link traffic to digital versions.

Activity: Promote area efforts to engage residents in volunteer stream monitoring, river clean-ups, water trail maintenance, watershed protection and education efforts, and other external regional events that complement the GLRC’s mission.

Corresponding topic areas: C, J

Priority: Medium

Target audience: Public – recruiting volunteers for action.

Key message: Connecting residents to the river through volunteer work promotes stewardship of the watershed and provides an opportunity to discuss personal actions they can take to further protect their local water resources.

Delivery mechanism: Events page on GLRC website and social media.

Year and frequency of implementation: River monitoring, cleanup, and maintenance activities often occur in the spring and fall, activities can be sporadic and will be promoted as they occur each year.

Responsible party: GLRC Coordinator

Evaluation: Website traffic, engagement on social media.

Activity: GLRC branded educational display

Corresponding topic areas: B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J (all)

Priority: Medium

Target audience: Public and businesses

Key message: General watershed education; promoting personal actions to reduce pollution.

Delivery mechanism: The display is used at events like the annual Quiet Water Symposium and Adopt-A-River events, and various regional events. The scrolling banner display is used at outdoor events and by each member for multiple weeks annually in a public area (library, office lobby, etc).

Year and frequency of implementation: Continuous use at annual events. Displays will be updated as needed in the future.

Responsible party: GLRC Coordinator, PEP Committee and GLRC communities.

Evaluation: Number of events, use in municipal lobbies, event attendance.



Activity: Share GLRC core-topic articles and/or fact sheets and information segments on article themes and related topics to reach diverse audiences across media outlets.

Corresponding topic areas: B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J (all)

Priority: Medium

Target audience: Public, elected officials

Key message: Articles cover the following topics:

What is a Watershed?	Pet Waste and the Environment
Wetlands: An Overview	Storm Vs. Sanitary Sewer Systems
Who/What is the GLRC	Responsible Car Washing
Septic System Maintenance	Adopt Your Catch Basin
Safe Fertilizer Use	Illicit Discharge
Vehicle Maintenance	Riparian Edge
Safe Salting	

Delivery mechanism: Articles and fact sheets/information segments are posted on the GLRC website, in the quarterly newsletter, community newsletters, and social media platforms.

Year and frequency of implementation: Maintain articles on the GLRC website and update as needed. Safe salting materials will be updated in FY 2025. GLRC will compile and share fact sheets and information segments based on core articles and related topics for multiple media, posting bi-monthly on GLRC social media throughout the permit cycle. A posting timeline guide is also used.

Responsible party: GLRC Coordinator, PEP Committee, and GLRC communities

Evaluation: Number of articles, facts sheets, and information segments posted, including the number of residents receiving a publication. The GLRC Coordinator tracks the GLRC website, newsletters, and social media analytics.

(B) Inform and educate the public about the connection of the MS4 to area waterbodies and the potential impacts discharges could have on surface waters of the state.

Activity: GLRC webpage titled “What is Stormwater” and “What’s a Watershed?”

Corresponding topic areas: A, C

Priority: High

Target audience: Public, elected officials

Key message: This section of the website promotes watershed health information, describes what citizens can do, how our water is impacted, etc.

Delivery mechanism: GLRC website and social media, community website links to the GLRC webpage

Year and frequency of implementation: Continuous presence on the website, update as appropriate. About my watershed page updated in 2023.

Responsible party: GLRC Coordinator

Evaluation: Website link traffic, social media analytics

Activity: GLRC quarterly newsletters and annual report

Corresponding topic areas: A, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J (all)

Priority: High

Target audience: Public, elected officials

Key message: The newsletters and annual report provide information on specific GLRC activities/events related to the six minimum measures. It also provides information related to relevant partner events and activities. It serves to educate municipal staff, elected officials, and the public.

Delivery mechanism: GLRC website, social media, email distribution

Year and frequency of implementation: Ongoing, newsletters are completed quarterly, and the annual report is completed by the second quarter of the fiscal year. To reach further audiences, the newsletter was revised to a digital format in 2024.

Responsible party: GLRC Coordinator, GLRC communities

Evaluation: Website link traffic, number of annual reports distributed at events, newsletter analytics.

(C) Educate the public on illicit discharges and promote public reporting of illicit discharges and improper disposal of materials into the MS4.

Activity: Maintain the GLRC and community website to include information on illicit discharges and contacts for reporting illicit discharges and acts of pollution.

Corresponding topic area: A

Priority: High

Target audience: Public

Key message: To report illicit discharges (description provided), illegal dumping, etc.

Delivery mechanism: GLRC website and social media, permittee website

Year and frequency of implementation: Continuous posting on GLRC website and social media and community websites. As needed, the PEP committee will explore different delivery methods (language, etc.) to make this more relatable to the public.

Responsible party: GLRC Coordinator, PEP Committee, GLRC communities

Evaluation: Website link traffic and social media analytics

(D) Promote preferred cleaning materials and procedures for car, pavement, and power washing.

Activity: Series of posters and brochures covering car washing, pet waste, motor oil and fertilizer reduction.

Corresponding topic areas: A, B, F, G

Priority: Medium

Target audience: Public

Key message: Posters and brochures describe the impact that bad practices related to car washing, pet waste disposal, motor oil disposal, and fertilizer applications can have on water quality. They also provide alternatives or best management practices for each of the four topics.

Delivery mechanism: Posters and brochures are available in community lobbies, brochures are handed out at public events, etc. Similar information is posted on the GLRC website and GLRC social media platforms.

Year and frequency of implementation: Continuous use at public events like the annual Quiet Water Symposium and Adopt-A-River events, various regional events, and on the website and social media platforms. Brochure was updated in 2024; update as appropriate.

Responsible party: GLRC Coordinator, PEP Committee, and GLRC communities

Evaluation: Number of brochures distributed by the GLRC coordinator at area events and meetings, website link traffic, and social media analytics

(E) Inform and educate the public on proper application and disposal of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers.

See the corresponding topic area G below.

(F) Promote proper disposal practices for grass clippings, leaf litter, and animal wastes that may enter into the MS4.

Activity: Promote existing materials related to grass clippings and leaf litter while providing additional advice to the public on how to select a watershed-friendly vendor for lawncare management.

Corresponding topic area: A

Priority: High

Target audience: Public, small businesses

Key message: Use the best management practices for management of grass clippings and leaf litter.

Delivery mechanism: Promoted through the GLRC educational display. Posted to GLRC social media platforms and the website.

Year and frequency of implementation: 2013, continuous

Responsible party: GLRC Coordinator and GLRC communities

Evaluation: Number of flyers/brochures handed out, website link traffic, social media analytics

Activity: Continue to maintain pet waste reduction watershed signage at parks or designated dog areas, expanding locations as needed, while posting pet waste reduction information on social media platforms and the website.

Corresponding topic areas: A, D

Priority: Medium

Target audience: Public

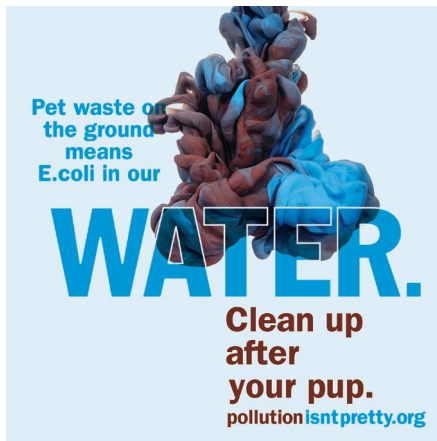
Key message: Promoting pet waste reduction for watershed protection, connecting the public to their surrounding environment.

Delivery mechanism: Passing vehicles, people biking, running, and walking pets will view the signs. Website and social media.

Year and frequency of implementation: The signs will be maintained indefinitely with help from the local road commissions. Pet waste information will be present on mywatersheds.org indefinitely, with at least two GLRC social media posts per year.

Responsible party: GLRC communities, GLRC Coordinator

Evaluation: Signs posted, maintenance activities, website traffic, social media analytics



(G) Identify and promote the availability, location, and requirements of facilities for collection or disposal of household hazardous waste, travel trailer sanitary wastes, chemicals, yard wastes, and motor vehicle fluids.

Activity: Promote local household hazardous waste collection and recycling events and consider paid boosting of social media messages on these topics when possible.

Corresponding topic areas: D, E

Priority: Medium

Target audience: Public, small businesses

Key message: Pollution prevention by using available resources for appropriate disposal of waste.

Delivery mechanism: GLRC website, GLRC social media, community websites.

Year and frequency of implementation: Continuous, updates as necessary and as events are scheduled.

Responsible party: GLRC coordinator and GLRC communities

Evaluation: Website link traffic, social media analytics

(H) Inform and educate the public on proper septic system care and maintenance, and how to recognize system failure.

Activity: Promote information on proper septic system care. Post Ingham County's local Point of Sale/Time of Sale septic/well inspection ordinance on GLRC website and on Ingham County community member websites.

Corresponding topic area: A

Priority: Low

Target audience: Public

Key message: Maintain your septic system; it could be contaminating local water bodies through stormwater runoff.

Delivery mechanism: GLRC website and social media, GLRC community websites.

Year and frequency of implementation: Continuous, septic system "Protecting Homeowners and Our Waters: Septic Systems of Mid-Michigan" blog topical developed in 2023.

Responsible party: GLRC coordinator and GLRC communities.

Evaluation: Website link traffic, social media analytics, flyers distributed.

(I) Educate the public on, and promote the benefits of, green infrastructure and Low Impact Development.

Activity: Promote Green Infrastructure and Low Impact Development brochure

Corresponding topic area: A

Priority: High

Target audience: Public, elected officials, small businesses

Key message: Promote the use of Low Impact Development (LID) and Green Infrastructure (GI) as tools for reducing polluted runoff from developments and homes. The brochure explains what LID and GI are and provides examples and resources (links).

Delivery mechanism: GLRC website, GLRC social media platforms, use with GLRC educational display, etc.

Year and frequency of implementation: Continuous, will be used at events like the annual Quiet Water Symposium and Adopt-A-River events, various regional events. Brochure updated in 2024.

Responsible party: GLRC Coordinator

Evaluation: Number of brochures distributed by GLRC Coordinator, website traffic, social media analytics

Activity: GLRC Local Green Infrastructure Projects webpage

Corresponding topic area: A

Priority: High

Target audience: Public, small businesses

Key message: The webpage highlights various local LID and GI projects in the region to help encourage others to pursue projects in their own neighborhood or community.

Delivery mechanism: GLRC website and social media platforms, various GLRC community websites

Year and frequency of implementation: Continuous, will update as needed, revision planned during next permit cycle.

Responsible party: GLRC Coordinator

Evaluation: Website link traffic.

Activity: Green Infrastructure educational programming

Corresponding topic area: A

Priority: High

Target audience: GLRC members, elected officials, public

Key message: Educate the public, members, and elected officials on several different best management practices (examples include snow management, Green Infrastructure project highlights, Green Infrastructure monitoring results, pervious pathways, and tree preservation techniques, etc.)

Delivery mechanism: GLRC website, social media platforms, newsletter distribution, presentations

Year and frequency of implementation: Continuous presence of GI information on website and social media, GLRC to host two educational stormwater seminars on topics A-F per permit cycle.

Responsible party: GLRC Coordinator, PEP Committee

Evaluation: Number of people reached by email, website traffic, social media analytics. Attendance at programs.

Activity: Paid promotion of educational videos

Corresponding topic areas: A, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J (all)

Priority: High

Target audience: Public

Key message: Implement practices to reduce pollution. Survey evidence suggests a strong public preference for visual education and the use of YouTube; focus on educational videos for all topics.

Delivery mechanism: GLRC website, GLRC social media platforms, YouTube, video distribution.

Year and frequency of implementation: Continue use of videos and expand to cover all topics in next permit cycle. GLRC has and continues to post video segments to the website and social media platforms.

Responsible party: GLRC Coordinator

Evaluation: Number of video views, website traffic, social media analytics

(J) Identify and educate commercial, industrial, and institutional entities likely to contribute pollutants to stormwater runoff.

Activity: Educate the business community on MS4 and pollution prevention, including proper road salt application and storage. Will outreach to business associations and networks, and industrial and institutional entities to share information on how their operations can impact the MS4 or to partner with them in educating their customers.

Corresponding topic area: A

Priority: Medium

Target audience: Businesses, industries, institutions

Key message: Improve stormwater management to reduce pollution.

Delivery mechanism: Sharing educational materials with businesses, networks, presentations to business groups, and/or utilizing business publications.

Year and frequency of implementation: The GLRC Coordinator will outreach to the business community twice per permit cycle.

Responsible party: PEP Committee, GLRC Coordinator

Evaluation: Number of connections made with local businesses, etc.

Activity: Educate municipalities throughout Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties in best management practices to reduce road salt use for roads, parking lots, and sidewalks.

Corresponding topic areas: A, B

Priority: High

Target audience: Municipalities and their road departments

Key message: Lessen chloride content in stormwater through smart application and storage of road salt.

Delivery mechanism: Training and educational materials, newsletters

Year and frequency of implementation: Ensure municipal staff are educated in BMPs once during the permit cycle, provide educational materials in January quarterly newsletters.

Responsible party: PEP Committee, GLRC Coordinator

Evaluation: Number of people reached, number of materials distributed, newsletter analytics