

Green Government Challenge

Montgomery County is participating in the Virginia Municipal League's (VML) Green Government Challenge.

It is a friendly competition designed to encourage the implementation of specific environmental policies and practical actions that lead to a sustainable community. As the specific actions are achieved, cities, towns and counties can become a certified "Green Government."

Supporting this initiative reduces our environmental footprint, saves money, and ensures that Montgomery County will continue to be vibrant for many generations.

Clean Water Act

Did you know, under the federal Clean Water Act, there are stormwater requirements? They are administered under the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program.

Montgomery County is required to have a MS4 permit for urbanized areas to prevent the discharge of pollutants such as pet waste, trash, engine oil and fertilizers into waterways.

Learn more about county initiatives to go green at www.montva.com/GoGreenMC



wonderful water

Water Conservation at Home

Check for leaks inside and out



A small drip from a worn faucet washer can waste 20 gallons of water per day. Larger leaks can waste hundreds of gallons.

Put a little food coloring in your toilet tank. If, without flushing, the color begins to appear in the bowl within 30 minutes, you have a leak that should be repaired immediately. Most replacement parts are inexpensive and easy to install.

Leaks outside the home can be just as wasteful as leaks indoors. Eliminate leaks by using hose washers at spigots and hose connections.

Insulate your water pipes

It's easy and inexpensive to insulate your water pipes with pre-slit foam pipe insulation. You'll get hot water faster plus avoid wasting water while it heats up.

Use your dishwasher and clothes washer for full loads only

Automatic dishwashers and clothes washers should be fully loaded for optimum water conservation. Most makers of dishwashing soap recommend **not** pre-rinsing dishes, which is a big water savings.

Turn off the faucet

There is no need to keep the water running while brushing your teeth, lathering hands or shaving. When shaving, partially fill the sink with warm water instead of rinsing the razor under running water.

Keep a bottle of drinking water in the refrigerator

Running tap water to cool it off for drinking water is wasteful. Store drinking water in the fridge in a safe drinking bottle.

Put a layer of mulch around trees and plants

Mulch will slow evaporation of moisture while discouraging weed growth.

Deep-soak your lawn



When watering the lawn, do it long enough for the moisture to soak down to the roots where it will do the most good. A light sprinkling can evaporate

quickly and tends to encourage shallow root systems. Put an empty tuna can on your lawn - when it's full, you've watered about the right amount.

Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways and sidewalks.

Mow lawns properly



When mowing your lawn, set the mower blades to 2-3 inches high. Longer grass

shades the soil improving moisture retention and has more leaf surface to take in sunlight, allowing it to grow thicker and develop a deeper root system. This helps grass survive drought, tolerate insect damage, and fend off disease.

Conservation. Protection. Quality.

Help Protect Our Storm Water

Fix oil and antifreeze car leaks.

If not properly cleaned up, oil and antifreeze can be washed away into local water sources. Additionally, many pets are attracted to antifreeze, which, if consumed, can poison your pet.

All Montgomery County consolidated waste sites accept used oil and antifreeze for proper recycling--free of charge! For site locations, visit www.montva.com/wastemanagement.

Go to the car wash instead of washing your car on your driveway.

Using a car wash prevents soapy water runoff from leaving your property and reaching a storm drain or local stream.

Pick up after pets. Pet waste contains bacteria that pollute water.



A plastic shopping bag can be a simple and effective way to clean up pet waste. Many park areas also offer bags to clean up after your pet.

Pet waste is full of bacteria, viruses and parasites. When it is left on the lawn or the side of the street, the bacteria, viruses and parasites in that pet waste are picked up by rain water, which enters the storm

drain and runs into the nearest creek, river or lake. This is harmful for water quality and human health.

Keep fertilizers and lawn chemicals off pavement to prevent chemicals from getting into local water sources.

If using fertilizers or pesticides, do so sparingly and according to the manufacturer's directions. Also, avoid applying chemicals when the weather is calling for rain, otherwise they will be washed away, potentially harming water sources.

Fertilize lawns naturally by "grass cycling." Use lawnmower blades that mulch grass clippings and fallen leaves for your lawn. Clippings reintroduced to the lawn's soil can provide the grass with vital nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, and water.

Promptly clean up spills to keep them from washing into streets and drains.

Inexpensive clay cat litter can be used to absorb spills. You can also use wood chips, saw dust, or even newspaper.

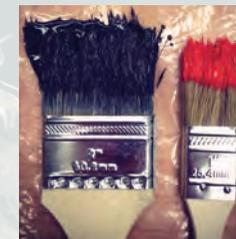
Prevent excessive rainwater runoff from your residential roof.

Use elbows or extensions on downspouts to have runoff go into the lawn instead of paved surfaces. Discharge the

downspouts at least 5 feet away from the foundation and to an area that slopes away from your home.

Also, consider installing a rain barrel to collect the rain water from your roof. Use the water in a garden or in flower beds. A rain barrel can save you money, too, if you pay for municipal water.

Use and dispose of hazardous substances (like paints, solvents, and cleaners) responsibly.



Use these items in the smallest amounts possible and follow the directions on the label. Store them properly to avoid leaks and spills. Clean paint brushes in a sink, not outdoors.

If the paint is **dry**, latex paint can be disposed of as refuse at all of Montgomery County's consolidated waste sites.

Properly dispose hazardous waste products on the third Saturday of each month at the Montgomery Regional Solid Waste Authority in Christiansburg.

To make an appointment for the hazardous waste disposal event, call 540-381-2820, Ext. 300. This service is free to county residents!