

**Stormwater Workgroup**  
**Thursday, January 15, 2009**  
**1:00 PM to 2:30 PM**

**Members present:**

Karen Kottke (AECOM), Michelle Ruckstuhl (TCEQ), Mary Purzer (AECOM), Steve Hupp (HCPHES-EPH), Bruce Heiberg (BPA), Stacy Pentecost (TCEQ), Dorene Hancock (COH), Nick Russo (Harris County), Philip Moore (Montgomery County), Richard Chapin on phone (COH)

**H-GAC Staff present:**

Rachel Powers

**Discussion:**

Everyone present was given an updated version of the nine elements table. Rachel explained that everything in italics had been added since the last meeting and that the stormwater facilities were added to the table as requested at the previous meeting. It was brought up that outfalls should be added to the list of facilities. The opinion was expressed that modifications may need to be made to stormwater outfalls in the future and could include such things as altering the method of discharge to prevent sediment in the channel from being stirred up.

Implementation activities mentioned for which there have been documented reductions in bacteria levels in stormwater include: street sweeping, storm inlet/sewer cleaning, and wet basins. However, results are not always consistent.

The primary way that the City of Los Angeles is addressing contaminated stormwater runoff is by reducing the volume of stormwater. Included in this method is a conservation education program as well as projects that collect, treat and then either release the stormwater to the nearby waterway or reuse the water in some way. Low Impact Development is one way to reduce the volume of stormwater.

The EPA is developing a rule that tracts over 30 acres will be required to treat stormwater. A rule like this may not have much of an effect in Harris County, but the surrounding counties, especially Montgomery County, should see a positive effect if bacteria truly is a problem. One concern is that the data this rule is being based on is coming from the Northwest. The effluent limit being proposed is 13 NTUs, which is extremely low and might be impossible to meet.

Some other sources that maybe should be addressed in the Stormwater workgroup include ponding and standing water with slime in the storm sewer pipes and organic trash. One possible implementation activity mentioned was inlet filters, although with these would need to be maintained to prevent street flooding.

Modifying all outfalls would be very expensive. Additionally there has been no documented effectiveness of modified outfalls to reduce bacteria levels in stormwater. Forms of outfall modification include:

- Baffle boxes (bacteria could grow and be released)
- Filters (bacteria could grow and be released)
- Wetlands (require land)
- Gullies that run parallel to a channel before dumping into it
- Step pools (lack of topography)

There are two ways that stormwater systems will need to be addressed. New development will be able to follow any new guidelines developed and existing development may need to be retrofitted starting with the large outfalls.

*Priorities from this workgroup:*

- Bracketed legislature to obtain regulatory over stormwater discharges
- Authority to make illicit discharges illegal with definite criminal penalties and civil action
- Treat outfalls before they dump into the natural stream
- Research where the most bacteria is coming from in a system
- What IAs would give you the most bang for the buck

*Criteria:*

- Cost-effectiveness
- Biggest sources first

*For Research workgroup:*

Modify a medium sized outfall and see what kind of reductions in bacteria result. What is the most effective way to treat outfalls?

**Next meeting:**

Monday, March 16, 2009, 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM, H-GAC Offices, Conference Room B