

## **WAYNE COUNTY: Water group seeking a stream of ideas**

### **Jan. 20 meeting to focus on pollution, long-range planning**

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When it comes to improving water quality, members of a group of western Wayne County municipalities want to remind residents that the little guy can have a big impact.

What flows through a storm drain in one city -- be it a quart of oil spilled on your driveway or phosphorous-based lawn fertilizer from a neighbor's yard -- can affect the water quality in communities downstream, said James Katona, Taylor's director of public works.

When it rains, chemicals on lawns, driveways and streets get washed into creeks or storm drains that empty into creeks or rivers.

"Whatever's done in a watershed will be shared by those who live in the watershed," Katona said. "Sooner or later, what they do on their driveways -- even just oil on their driveways -- it's going to end up at a common point and affect everybody."

Katona and other representatives of about 20 western Wayne County communities are inviting the public to gather from 7-8:30 p.m. Jan. 20 at the city of Taylor's municipal offices, 23555 Goddard Road, to learn about how residents can prevent water pollution. The group also will brainstorm ideas on how the municipalities can further their own efforts.

"We're both looking for public input and trying to bring attention to improving water quality," said Huron Township Supervisor John Mitchell.

Committees of representatives from communities in two watersheds are sponsoring the meeting. Katona chairs a group in the Ecorse Creek Watershed, which includes Allen Park, Dearborn Heights, Ecorse, Inkster, Lincoln Park, Romulus, Southgate, Taylor, Wayne, Westland and Wyandotte.

Mitchell chairs the other group, the Combined Downriver Watershed, which includes Brownstown Township, Grosse Ile, Huron Township, Gibraltar, Riverview, Romulus, Southgate, Taylor, Woodhaven and Wyandotte.

Both groups also include representatives from Wayne County and the Wayne County Airport Authority.

The committees are holding the public meetings as part of a process to comply with federal and state laws.

The groups have been charged with developing long-range watershed plans to decide how they will keep their waterways clean, healthy, safe and aesthetically pleasing. The watershed management plans must be filed with the state this fall.

Even though the government requires the meeting, the committees sincerely want to hear from the public, Katona said.

"Their experiences and input are invaluable to us," he said. Some municipalities, including Taylor and Huron Township, have even sent thousands of flyers home with schoolchildren asking parents to come to the meeting.

Mitchell said water quality is an issue that affects everyone: "It's very important to future generations and this generation