



*HEALTHY HOME TIPS: GET A
BEAUTIFUL YARD, SAVE MONEY,
& PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT*

**You can protect water quality
and the Rouge River!**

**Canton Community Foundation
Local Impact Alliance
March 15, 2023**

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Executive Director**




1

ALLIANCE OF ROUGE COMMUNITIES (ARC)

- ▶ **Quasi-governmental organization**
 - ▶ Local municipalities
 - ▶ Counties
 - ▶ Educational institutions
 - ▶ Stewardship groups
- ▶ **Work cooperatively to meet State permit requirements & restore the Rouge River**
- ▶ **Funded by membership dues from local governments and supported by grants**

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2

WE ALL LIVE IN A WATERSHED

Rouge River Watershed

An area of land that drains to a common body of water, such as a lake, river or stream (and even groundwater)

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3

WE ALL LIVE IN A WATERSHED

- ▶ Pollutants travel from upstream to downstream areas
- ▶ Pollutants travel at the junction between groundwater and surface water
- ▶ As land becomes altered or developed it increases the amount of pollutants traveling

Rouge River Watershed

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4

WHAT IS STORMWATER?

- ▶ Water that originates during rain events and snow/ice melt
- ▶ Carries the pollutants
- ▶ Travels over land or through storm drains, catch basins or pipes (called outfalls)
- ▶ Ends up untreated in our rivers, streams and lakes



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5

WHAT IS WASTEWATER?

- ▶ Water that has been used in the home, in a business, or as part of an industrial process
- ▶ Is treated before it is released back to the environment

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6

WHY PROTECT WATER QUALITY IN THE ROUGE RIVER?

- Understanding allows us to comprehend that we can have an impact on water quality far beyond our own back door



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7

IMPROVED WATER QUALITY MEANS

- Better habitat
- More aquatic species
- More canoeing and recreational activities
- More fishing and swimming
- Better economy
- Healthier Rouge River!



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8

QUESTIONS?

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9

WHAT YOU CAN DO ...

- ▶ In your home
- ▶ In your yard
- ▶ With your vehicles
- ▶ In your community
- ▶ In your business



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10

IN YOUR HOME

- ▶ Minimize use of your washing machine, dishwasher or shower
- ▶ Pour greasy or oily food waste into a jar – not the sink
- ▶ Recycle your chemicals at a Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection event in you community



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11

IN YOUR HOME

▶ What can you take to a HHW event?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ▶ Acids | ▶ Floor care products | ▶ Paint (oil based) |
| ▶ Aerosols | ▶ Fluorescent light bulbs | ▶ Paint stripper & thinner |
| ▶ Antifreeze | ▶ Oil & diesel fuel | ▶ Polishes (auto, furniture, metal & nail) |
| ▶ Batteries (household & auto) | ▶ Gasoline | ▶ Pool chemicals |
| ▶ Brake fluid | ▶ Glue | ▶ Primer (oil based) |
| ▶ Bug sprays | ▶ Ink cartridges | ▶ Propane tanks (from grills) |
| ▶ Car wax | ▶ Kerosene | ▶ Rat poison |
| ▶ Caulk | ▶ Light bulbs | ▶ Sealant |
| ▶ Cell phones | ▶ Lighter fluid | ▶ Sharps (in metal/plastic containers) |
| ▶ Computer equipment | ▶ Medicine | ▶ Smoke detectors |
| ▶ Cleaning solvents | ▶ Mercury waste | ▶ Stereos/TVs |
| ▶ Drain cleaners | ▶ Moth balls | ▶ Turpentine |
| ▶ Fertilizer/weed killer | ▶ Oils (fuel, cooking & cutting) | ▶ Varnish/Wood preservatives |

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12

IN YOUR HOME

- ▶ Do not put “disposable wipes” down a drain or toilet
- ▶ Recycle your holiday greenery



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13

IN YOUR HOME

- ▶ Maintain your septic system
 - ▶ Have it inspected every 3 years
 - ▶ Have your tank pumped every 3-5 years



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14

IN YOUR HOME

► Why are we concerned about septic systems?

- Contributing source of pollution in the Rouge River Watershed
- Often neglected and not routinely maintained after the initial installation
- A malfunctioning system can contaminate our waterways and groundwater supply



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15

IN YOUR HOME

► A properly functioning septic system will:

- Help protect and enhance the quality of surface and groundwater resources
- Protect public health from disease causing organisms and nuisance conditions
- Properly dispose of your wastewater
- Preserve the waterways, including the Rouge River, for recreational enjoyment
- Save you money!



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16

QUESTIONS?

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17

IN YOUR YARD

- ▶ **Winterize your pool, spa or fountain**
 - ▶ Allow the chlorine to dissipate for several days
 - ▶ Drain it to a landscaped area



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18

IN YOUR YARD

- ▶ Cut grass to a height of no less than 3 inches
- ▶ Don't over-water
- ▶ Mulch your grass and leaves



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19

IN YOUR YARD

- ▶ Don't overuse fertilizer
- ▶ Use slow release, phosphorous-free fertilizer
- ▶ Use a broom to sweep fertilizer and grass clippings back onto your yard
- ▶ Avoid weed & feed products



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20

IN YOUR YARD

- ▶ Pick up after your pet (even in the winter)
- ▶ Don't feed the geese



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21

IN YOUR YARD

- ▶ Install a rain barrel to capture rainwater
- ▶ Winterize rain barrel to extend use
- ▶ Disconnect downspouts and direct them into your garden
- ▶ Install a compost bin



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22

IN YOUR YARD

- ▶ Use non-toxic cleaning alternatives such as white vinegar, baking soda and hydrogen peroxide
- ▶ During winter months shovel often to reduce salt use or choose an environmentally-friendly alternative



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23

QUESTIONS?

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24

IN YOUR YARD

► Use native trees and plants

- Do not require fertilizers
- Require less water
- Provide wildlife habitat
- Promote biodiversity
- Reduce maintenance costs
- Improved water quality



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25

IN YOUR YARD

► Michigan Native Plant Producers Association – www.mnppa.org

- American Roots – www.americanrootswildflowers.com
- Hidden Savanna Nursery – www.hiddensavanna.com
- Michigan Wildflower Farm – www.michiganwildflowerfarm.com
- Native Connections – www.nativeconnections.net
- The Native Plant Nursery, LLC – www.nativeplant.com
- Wetlands Nursery, Inc. – 231-848-4202
- WILDTYPE Design, Native Plant & Seed, LTD – www.wildtypeplants.com

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26

IN YOUR YARD

- Install a rain garden to reduce stormwater runoff



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27

IN YOUR YARD

- Rain gardens
 - Filter runoff pollution
 - Recharge local groundwater/conserves water
 - Improve water quality/ protect rivers & streams
 - Remove standing water
 - Reduce mosquito breeding
 - Habitat creation
 - Reduce potential home flooding



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28

IN YOUR YARD

- ▶ Protect waterfront property
- ▶ Create buffer zones to restore the shoreline



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29

IN YOUR YARD

- ▶ Shoreline buffers
 - ▶ Provide shade & moderate water temperature
 - ▶ Stabilize stream banks & reduce erosion
 - ▶ Filter & trap sediment from runoff
 - ▶ Absorb nutrients from runoff
 - ▶ Slow runoff & reduce flooding
 - ▶ Provide food & habitat for invertebrates, fish, & wildlife
 - ▶ Deter Canada Geese



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30

IN YOUR YARD

► Include pollinators

- Bees & butterflies
- Essential to health of the environment
- How plants reproduce & produce fruit
- Great ecosystem health



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31

IN YOUR YARD

► Planting trees

- Increases property values
- Combats climate change
- Improves air quality
- Conserves energy
- Conserves water
- Reduces stormwater runoff
- Improves habitat



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32

QUESTIONS?

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33

WITH YOUR VEHICLES

- ▶ Use your local car wash so built-up road salt, oil and other pollutants don't go down storm drains
- ▶ When cleaning your garage, sweep it and dispose of it in the garbage
- ▶ Prevent fluid leaks from reaching paved surfaces



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34

WITH YOUR VEHICLES

► Boat owners

- Wash your boat to remove plants & aquatic animals after every use
- Dump unused bait in the trash not the water
- Drain water from equipment before transporting
- Dispose of your boat waste properly



► RV owners

- Dispose of sanitary waste at a drop-off location – never down a storm drain or roadside ditch

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35

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36

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

► Detention ponds

- Plant a variety of native species
- Remove invasive species
- Remove trash around detention ponds
- Install bat boxes & bird houses
- Regular inspections



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37

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Keep storm drains clear of debris
- Don't pour chemicals or other liquids down a storm drain



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38

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

► Report illegal dumping



Michigan's Pollution Alert System	800-292-4706
Macomb County	877-679-4337
Oakland County	248-858-0931
St. Clair County	877-504-SWIM
Washtenaw County	734-222-3800
Wayne County	888-223-2363

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39

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

► Get involved!

STEWARDSHIP OF THE ROUGE RIVER
SINCE 1986

**Friends
of the ROUGE**

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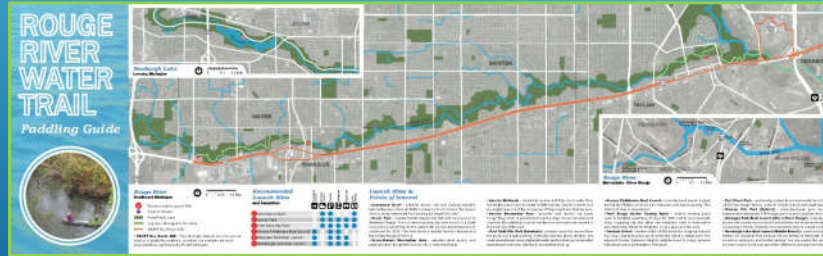
40

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

**Friends
of the ROUGE**

EXPLORE—ROUGE RIVER WATER TRAIL

► Paddling trips



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41

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

**Friends
of the ROUGE**

► Explore together

- Bug hunts
- Frog & toad survey



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42

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

**Friends
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► Restore

- Rouge Rescue
- Restoration workdays



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43

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

**Friends
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RESTORE—RAIN GARDENS

- Training
- Work days



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44

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

**Friends
of the ROUGE**

SPEAK UP FOR THE OUTDOORS!



- ▶ VOLUNTEER
- ▶ BECOME A MEMBER
- ▶ www.therouge.org

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45

IN YOUR BUSINESS

- ▶ Personal satisfaction whether you are the owner, employee or patron
- ▶ Easier and less costly to prevent pollution than to try to clean it up
- ▶ Get employees involved!



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46

IN YOUR BUSINESS

► May be polluting if businesses

- Rinse washwater down a storm drain
- Spill materials or wastes in parking lot without cleaning them up
- Allow materials or wastes stored outside to leak



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47

IN YOUR BUSINESS

- Facility management
- Cleaning paved surfaces
- Cleaning up spills & leaks
- Storing & handling inventory
- Storing & disposing wastes
- Dumpster & loading dock maintenance
- Cleaning equipment
- Maintaining landscaped areas
- Employee training & education



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48

