



## Three steps to ID a sewage break in the field

It's happened to everyone whose job it is to do field work. You have ventured out for an assigned task and wind up finding another problem. Recently while I was out inspecting stream bank erosion in a township park with the water company, we came across a sewer line break. This would have gone unnoticed if not for the expertise of the Aqua PA staff. Unlike some pollution, sewer line breaks leave tell tale signs in a stream that can be easily identified. This is what I learned.

1. **Smell-** This is an obvious one; if it smells like sewage in the air or water, there could be a problem. It also might mean you are standing too close to a manhole, but its worth taking a closer look.
2. **Sphaerotilus-** This is a bacteria present in sewage, it appears in the stream as a thick gray algae, which will cling to rocks, branches, or other debris in the stream. Sphaerotilus will completely cover polluted sections of the stream. A definite problem exists.
3. **Solids-** Solids are usually found close to the break or in backwater areas. They

consist of toilet paper or other waste associated with toilets and sewage. It's a good bet that as solids increase along stream edges or in woody debris you are getting closer to the broken pipe.

Finding any one of the above signs does not necessarily mean there is a current problem. The greater the combination the more likely there is sewage actively impacting the stream. If you should come across a combination of these signs or feel there is a need to investigate further, contact the municipality immediately. If you do not know the municipality or cannot reach them, DEP has staff specializing in water quality and pollution events. They can be contacted at 484-250-5900.

In our case, we followed the smell and sphaerotilus upstream. Eventually we found solids clinging to fallen branches and finally saw the culprit nearby. A sewer line from a cul-de-sac extending across the stream had been smashed open by vandals or debris and was leaking raw sewage directly into the source water tributary. We contacted both the municipality and DEP. The problem was corrected quickly thanks to an emergency permit and swift municipal crews.

*William Gothier, Watershed Specialist  
Delaware County C.D.*

## PPC Plans – Every Site Needs One

In addition to an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, any site covered under an NPDES permit for Discharges Associated with Construction Activities is required to develop a Preparedness, Prevention, and Contingency (PPC) plan. The purpose of a PPC plan is to ensure that Best Management Practices are implemented in case of an accidental pollution event involving pollutants other than sediment.

Potential pollutants common to construction activity include: pesticides, petrochemicals (oil, gasoline, asphalts), wastewater, construction chemicals (acids, soil additives, concrete curing compounds), garbage, cement, lime, sanitary wastes, and fertilizers.

A typical PPC plan includes a general description of the construction activity, an emergency response program, material and waste inventory, spill and leak prevention and response, inspection and housekeeping programs, security, and any effects that those external factors may have on the site.

Since virtually every permitted project uses some sort of construction equipment that could potentially spill or leak chemicals, every site should develop and have on site a PPC plan. There is a good chance that if the Environmental Protection Agency ever visits your site, they will ask to see one. In an effort to make sure that all applicants recognize the importance of a PPC plan, the Regional Office of the Department of Environmental Protection has directed that districts not approve a permit application in which question 1 in Section D of the Notice of Intent is not checked "Yes". Submittal of the PPC plan to the district is not required, but if the appropriate box is not checked, the application will be deemed administratively incomplete.

If you have any questions regarding PPC plans, or for guidelines for developing one, contact your local Conservation District.

*Bridget R. Thompson, District Technician  
Delaware County CD*

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## Why Did I Get Sent to Enforcement?

Enforcement of Chapter 102 regulations with associated penalties will occur when voluntary compliance is not achieved. Conservation Districts strive to obtain voluntary compliance. Unfortunately, when the developer and the contractor fail to cooperate, the enforcement process is required. Most districts usually follow these steps before a site is referred to DEP for enforcement:

- A regular site inspection
- On the second inspection, if no corrections were made, a notice of violation is issued
- On the third inspection, if problems still exist, the site is sent to enforcement
- Significant pollution or failure to implement the Erosion and Sediment Control Plan will result in a "stop work order".

Districts will not refer your site to enforcement without justification. For developers and excavators, there are many ways to avoid enforcement action. Here are a few ideas to consider:

- Contact the district when problems are encountered, even if it is sediment pollution
- Implement your approved Erosion and Sediment Control Plan
- Follow the sequence of construction
- Conduct self inspections weekly and after every rain event
- Maintain all erosion and sediment controls
- Appoint an experienced job superintendent to oversee all activities
- When an inspection report is received with deficiencies, make it a priority to repair them by the deadline and forward a written report to the inspector
- Schedule a re-inspection to verify compliance

Following these steps can help avoid complication down the road and make a project proceed much smoother. As stated before, districts are here to help with any questions or problems you may encounter with erosion and sediment control. Hopefully, these steps can help avoid the enforcement process altogether.

*Kevin Boyle*  
*Delaware County CD*

## Signs, Signs Everywhere

Municipalities have been very busy installing signs at bridge crossings to help motorists learn the names of local streams in the area. The purpose of the project is to raise awareness, connect people to their waterways, and encourage them to protect water resources.

The Highway Stream Signage Project is being coordinated in the region by the Southeastern PA Resource Conservation and Development (SEPA RC&D) Council, with the Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (POWR) administering the program statewide.

Environmental advisory councils, watershed organizations, and county planning departments assisted local municipalities by selecting the sites and preparing the applications. The PA Department of Transportation provided project guidance and assisted with the review of applications and sites.

"We are glad to support this local effort of helping residents and visitors to learn the names of the streams in the region," said Karen Holm, Chairperson of the SEPARC&D Council, "We hope this will help people gain a greater appreciation for the streams in Southeastern Pennsylvania."

Frank Raymond Cetera, POWR Watershed Programs Coordinator said, "This is an important step in the conservation and protection of our water resources in Pennsylvania."

In Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery counties there are over 225 sites where signs will be installed. Across the state approximately 1743 sites will have signs installed identifying streams and rivers. The project started in the Spring of 2003 and is scheduled to be completed by June of this year.

The Highway Stream Signage Project is being funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Growing Greener Program. Because of the interest and success of the project, SEPA RC&D is considering doing the project again in future years.

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Resource Conservation and Development Council is a seven county regional nonprofit organization that partners with organizations, businesses, and governmental agencies to address local needs dealing with land conservation, water resources, community development and land management.

For more information about the Highway Stream Signage Project, contact the SEPA RC&D Council at 215-453-9527 Ext. 5, [www.separcd.org](http://www.separcd.org).

*John Metrick*  
*SEPA RC&D Council*

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## E&S training for engineers

Nearly 70 primarily young engineers participated in an erosion and sediment control training program on April 1 at the Montgomery County 4-H Center at Skippack. This annual workshop is sponsored by the Southeast Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts.

The day-long seminar included presentations on seven key aspects of effective erosion control, including: plan concepts, common problems with plan submissions, swale and channel calculations and what district reviewers look for, how to prepare an NPDES permit application checklist, post construction storm water management, and sediment basins and outlets.

District staff who lead the program included: Ed Magargee, Delaware County district manager; Jesse Howe and Mike Shannon, Montgomery County District; Mike Hunter, Bucks County district engineer; Dan Greig, Chester County district manager, and Joe Sofranko and Brad Eldred, of the Chester district.

These training programs, which began 15 years ago, have focused on many aspects of the erosion and sediment control profession, including National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits and traditional and post-construction storm water management.

Comments elicited from engineers who attended the workshop indicated a broad satisfaction of the information provided by both presenters and written handouts. More than 90 percent of the attendees felt that the speakers presented material will be helpful to them in their work; an even higher percentage felt that the handouts will be helpful.

Suggestions for improving future workshops included working with PennDOT to develop standards for highway projects, making documents and handouts available on the internet, more use of photos and other graphics during the presentations, and more examples of best management practices.

One participant needed to comment on the food that was served during the lunch break. "The roast beef sandwiches," he complained, "should have been served with provolone cheese." Oh, well, you can't please everyone.

*Fred Groshens  
Bucks County CD*



*Exhibits provided by producers of erosion control products are a regular and popular feature of the Southeast Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts' annual engineers' training program. Here, awaiting the opening of the April 1 training program, are representatives of ACF Environmental, American Excelsior Co., Jobsite Products Inc. and Terre Hill Concrete.*


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# Lawn care without toxic chemicals

The "perfect" lawn — consistently green and weed-free — is sought by most homeowners. It is estimated that U.S. homeowners spend \$1.5 billion a year to apply millions of pounds of pesticides and fertilizers to try to keep their lawns green. However, homeowners tend to use up to 10 times more chemicals per acre than farmers. The perfect lawn does not come naturally, and in our zest to achieve it, we are contributing significantly to the pollution of our streams, waterways and valuable ground water resources.

Water quality is everyone's concern and everyone's responsibility. Here are some tips for achieving a nice lawn without using polluting chemicals:

## Monitor the lawn

Identify problems: sufficient sunlight and air? Trees may need pruning. Disease (dollar spot, slime mold, etc.)? Pests (chinch bugs, grubs, beetles)? Weeds (chick weed dandelion, etc.)? Treat problem areas only and use alternative controls specific to the problem.

## Mowing

Keep mower blade sharpened. Set mower for 3: cut; taller grass shades roots and chokes out weeds. Leave clipping on lawn to provide nitrogen.

## Test soil

Test soil for fertility and pH every three to five years. Adjust pH to 6.5 to 7.0 for bent grass and fescue; bluegrass, rye and Bermuda grasses need 7.0 to 8.0 pH.

## Plant proper varieties of grasses

Choose grasses for your soil and light conditions. To establish a strong turf, overseed in spring and fall.

## Reduce weeds

Identify weeds and determine your tolerance level. Hand dig or use non-toxic target-specific spot spray. A solution of 50% white vinegar and 50% water kills weeds at curbside, on sidewalks and driveways.

## Watering

Water deeply and infrequently to encourage deep root growth. Sloped lawns and sandy soils need more frequent watering. Water early in the morning.


## Lawn Services

Ask that they avoid chemicals entirely. Get a written contract specifying what materials the service will use. Reserve the privilege to cancel use of any chemical product. Do not let them treat problems that are not there.


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## Penalties collected for the year 2004 and through March 1, 2005

<i>SITE NAME</i>	<i>DEVELOPER</i>	<i>AMOUNT</i>
<b>Bucks County</b>		
Rock Creek Run	Orleans Bldrs.	\$14,000
Wiltshire Walk	Orleans Bldrs.	\$1,500
Our Lady of Good Counsel	Tom Little	\$3,500
Buckingham Forest	Toll Brothers	\$5,500
Kendall Court	JBC Const.	\$1,000
Tinicum Project	Beres Const.	\$2,500
Lake Warren Estates	Ruff Builders	\$3,000
Champion Carwash	Perry Cummings	\$1,500
Belvedere at Doyle Sq.	Main S. Group	\$9,500
Kintner Ridge	Beres Const.	\$2,500
Lowes Home Centers	Perry Const.	\$5,000
Pitcairn Prop.	Silver Lake Road const.	\$7,000
Commerce Bank	Builders Inc.	\$2,500
Easton Road Retail	Scott Contractors	\$4,500
Buckingham Forest	Toll Brothers	\$21,500
<b>Chester County</b>		
Meadowcroft Knoll	Autumn Hill Homes	\$12,000
90 Nottingham Drive	Mr. McMichael	\$5,000
Medford Farms	Ryan Homes	\$10,000
Briar Knoll	Hibernia Homes	\$10,000
Calnshire West Subd	Calnshire Estates LLC	\$1,500
Jenner's Pond	Jenner's Pond Assoc.	\$1,775
Marlborough Commons	JMBrown	\$7,750
Column Properties	L & R Lumber	\$8,000
Meadowview Estates	Land Associates, LLC	\$7,500
Villages of Rose View	Sheridan Construction	\$6,000
Downing Forge	South Down Homes	\$3,500
<b>Delaware County</b>		
Eckerd Drug	Eckerd Drug	\$3,500
Cavan Property	Thomas and John Smith	\$1,500
Forest Hills	Deer Run Assoc	\$5,000
Crossroads Center	CPC Associates	\$6,150
PX Properties	PX Properties, LLC	\$8,400
Hamanassett at Palomba		\$5,010
Walgreens	Mark Investments, Inc.	\$5,000
Spring Valley Phase III	D'Annunzio	\$8,000
<b>Montgomery County</b>		
Lederach Golf Course	Orleans & JL Watts	\$2,000
Acorn Hills	Sal Lapio	\$9,500
Glen at Plymouth	Sal Panione	\$3,600
Chestnut Woods	Hanover Hills Inc	\$1,750
Market Place at Oaks	Oak Mills Inc	\$9,000
Gravers Road	Gkilduff LP	\$7,000
King Street Water Main	Pottstown Boro Auth	\$2,500
Limerick Plaza	Longview Development	\$2,500
Sanatoga Ridge	Wilmer Hallman	\$2,000
Ravens Claw	D.H. LP	\$19,000
Villas	McGrath Homes	\$10,500
Pond Construction	Zeigler, Zeigler & Freed	\$4,500
Possum Hollow Ind Park	Pottstown Tent Rental	\$7,000
Stern Nester Property	Stern Nester	\$7,000
Darlington Reserve at Penn Crossing	Cutler Group	\$3,000

## Enforcement of Chapter 102

All Conservation Districts in Southeast Pennsylvania strive for voluntary compliance to the Erosion and Sediment Control regulations of Pennsylvania. Provided the violations on a particular site are not severe or willful, the individual is given the opportunity to correct violations voluntarily. Voluntary compliance is effective in a high percentage of violations discovered during field inspections conducted by Conservation Districts. This strategy has been used by the districts for more than 20 years.

Unfortunately, voluntary compliance is not always effective on every site. For those projects that fail to comply voluntarily, penalties are assessed utilizing a DEP civil penalty matrix. Fees vary depending upon the severity of violations, which are classified in categories of minor, moderate, or severe.

Conservation Districts are hopeful that the regulated community will examine a list such as this and place increased emphasis on effective implementation of their erosion and sediment control program. It is also important to note that not all the individuals or companies listed are "bad apples." Several on the list have other projects in the region that have never been out of compliance. The list is not complete; the region has many cases that have not been concluded. Cases that are not settled are not open for public review. If you have any comments or questions on Chapter 102 enforcement, please contact your local Conservation District.

## Bucks County presents conservation awards



County Commissioners and conservation district officials congratulate Reed Denby and family honored with the George M. Bush Award.



Arthur Friedman



Joseph Mihok



Silver Lake Nature Center and Friends Group



Brian Suter

Winners of the Bucks County Conservation District Annual Conservation Awards were honored at the Bucks County Commissioner's Meeting on Wednesday, March 16, 2005.

Recipients received letters of commendation from the Bucks County Commissioners for their outstanding service, as well as recognition plaques from the district, and \$200 honorariums.

The award winners and their categories were:

- **Dr. Arthur Friedman**, of the Northampton Township Board of Supervisors - Elected Official Award.
- **Brian Suter**, of Neshaminy High School - Environmental Education Award.
- **Joseph Mihok**, of Dublin and the Bucks County Chapter of Trout Unlimited - Conservation Volunteer Award.
- **Reed Denby**, of Sycamore Farm Solebury - George M. Bush Memorial Award for Agricultural Preservation. and,
- The **Silver Lake Nature Center and Friends Group** - Urban Conservation Award.
- **Plumstead Environmental Advisory Council** - Conservation Organization Award.

Bucks County Conservation District thanks all of their award winners for their dedication to Bucks County, and their continuing efforts for a better environment.

*Gretchen Schatschneider, Watershed Specialist  
Bucks County C.D.*



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## New Employees

**Bucks County Conservation District** welcomes **Rich Krasselt** as its new Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Specialist (CNPPS). Rich is a resident of Levittown. He has a Bachelor's of Science in Environmental Studies from East Stroudsburg Univ.

Rich graduated in 2004, and has been volunteering for the Bucks County Audubon Society at Honey Hollow. There he helped to complete a stream survey of the Honey Hollow Creek.

As well as filling the position of Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Specialist for the District, Rich will complete E&S Plan Reviews in portions of Bucks County that are within the Coastal Zone, and he will work with the South East Regional Clean Boating Program, as well as completing the annual Marina Survey.

*Gretchen Schatschneider, Watershed Specialist  
Bucks County C.D*



## 2004 Pyramid Awards

The Chester County Conservation District, in partnership with the Chester-Delaware Home Builders Association, presented the "Erosion and Sediment Control Excellence in Conservation" award at the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Pyramid Awards, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005. This award is given in recognition of a development, construction activity or design where exceptional best management practices are incorporated, implemented, and maintained. The project also has to be in compliance with PA Chapter 102 with no erosion control violations.

This year's award was presented to **Potter's Pond Development** by **Bentley Homes** in Schuylkill Township. Designed by Chester Valley Engineering, this development, located on the south side of Pothouse Road, demonstrated best management practices that included the rehabilitation of a wet pond, preservation of viewsheds and a historical monument area, and a tree protected area. The erosion and sediment controls included timely interim stabilization, limit of disturbance for construction, and installation of silt fence and rock construction entrances.

We also presented our first Honorable Mention Development Award to the **Moccasin Woods** site of **EIM Associates** development in West Fallowfield Township. This six-unit residential development off the north side of Schoff Road featured preservation of viewsheds, limited disturbance, alternative stormwater management designs and best management practices.

Congratulations to all those who participated, and best wishes for next year.

*Gaye Lynn Criswell  
Urban Team Leader*



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