



**Federal Section 319  
Nonpoint Source Grant  
2000-0184**

Huron River Watershed Council

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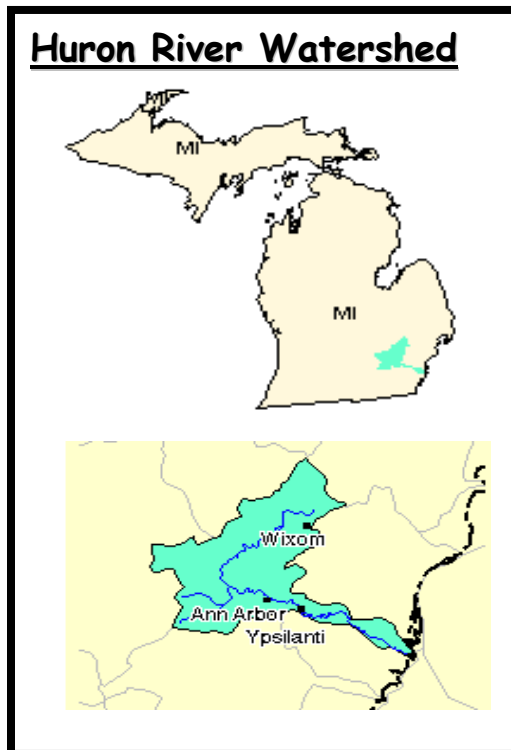
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## Huron River Information & Education Campaign

July 9, 2001 to September 30, 2004

**Project Description** - This project targeted nonpoint source pollution prevention through traditional marketing outlets, including print advertising, radio, direct mail and retail promotions.

An estimated 75% of the nonpoint source pollutants in the Huron River Watershed are the



result of individual practices, making homeowners the target audience for this campaign. With the conversion of open lands and farms to residential communities, it is critical that homeowners understand and respond to their impacts on the River system. **Preventing pollutants from reaching the River system is far more cost effective than waiting until restoration is required.**

Behaviors addressed by the campaign included:

- proper lawn care practices
- home toxics disposal
- septic system
- maintenance
- water conservation
- storm drain awareness

Market research was used to determine core behavioral motivations and how to use these motivations to inspire behavior change. Messages focused on items of interest to the homeowner, such as savings in time and money, with water quality protection positioned as an "added benefit." Individual impacts were stressed to empower homeowners with the message that "their actions do make a difference."

This was years five and six of implementing the Huron Information Education Campaign.

**Goal** - The long-term goal of this program was to create sustainable behavior change with respect to water resource protection. Challenges include market pressures, social pressures, and the costs of maintaining a presence in the market.

<b>Grant Amount:</b>	<b>\$161,769.00</b>
<b>Match Funds:</b>	<b>\$ 53,946.00</b>
<b>Total Amount:</b>	<b>\$215,742.00</b>

### **Sustainability**

In an effort to build on past work and share our experience with other agencies, workshops and a companion workbook were used to disseminate marketing techniques to interested environmental groups. Topics included market research, message positioning, design and production techniques, and evaluation.

### **Evaluation**

This campaign has celebrated many successes. A few examples of measures put into place to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign include:

- A contracted independent survey of tip card recipients revealing that 43% of recipients recalled the mailing, 38% read the tip cards, and 31% kept them for future use.
- Tracking of soil tests submitted during the promotional period revealing a 500% increase in submissions in the first year, with 79% of participants saying the advertising drew them to the program, and 60% changing their fertilization practices based on the test results.
- Tracking of home toxics drop-offs revealing a 75% increase in drop-offs the first year, with increases as high as 250% following tip card mailings. Surveys of participants on a specific drop-off day supported with print advertising revealed that 75% of the participants came because of the ads seen in the newspaper.
- Ninety people, representing municipalities and environmental agencies across the region, attended the "Marketing the Environment" workshops and 13 participants requested and received additional consultation post-workshop.

### **Partnerships**

Partnerships are critical to the success of any information and education effort, and this Campaign leveraged assets to secure and maintain partnerships that significantly expanded the reach of the Campaign. Partner efforts were supported with related print advertising, direct mail and promotions. A sample of partner agencies includes:

- 20 municipalities, utility providers, businesses and related agencies who print and disseminate direct mail, with over 450,000 pieces mailed to 80,000 households to date;
- MSU extension agents in 5 counties, Southeast Oakland County Resource Recovery Authority, Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Project and 14 retailers who coordinate the spring soil testing promotion;
- Home Toxics Reduction Facilities of Washtenaw and Livingston Counties;
- MDEQ storm water staff who attended I/E trainings, coordinated additional workshops and work with the campaign to coordinate state-wide messages.

### **I&E Activities:**

**Products** - to request a product, please contact Jennifer Wolf at the Huron River Watershed Council: [jwolf@hrwc.org](mailto:jwolf@hrwc.org)

- "Marketing the Environment" workbook
- "Developing A Communications Plan" workbook
- Watershed Map poster
- Soil testing flyer
- "Runoff As Resource" citizen guidebook
- "Tip cards" - BMPs for home owners
- "2003 NPSPP Calendar"
- print advertising samples
- Public Service Announcements samples