



Reducing Stormwater Polluting Behaviors through Social Marketing in the Bangor Urbanized Area

THE NEED

Nonpoint source pollution loading to waters is accelerated by poor land use decisions and practices and is often due to a lack of awareness by local residents. Homeowners remain less aware than farmers and foresters of the environmental effects of their management practices. It is therefore up to the homeowners to recognize and voluntarily reduce their use and/or overuse of lawn chemicals such as fertilizers and pesticides. Education of those homeowners is essential, but often not sufficient to convince them to change their practices. The development and testing of social marketing tools and techniques to convince homeowners to change their practices is necessary if we are to protect Maine's water resources from urban/suburban polluted runoff.

OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES

The BASWG is an incorporated collaboration of 10 entities in the Bangor Urbanized Area, each regulated under the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's Maine Pollution Discharge Elimination System (MEPDES) Stormwater Phase II regulations. Building on the Bangor Area Storm Water Group's (BASWG) successful education and outreach program, the BASWG will start to link the awareness and knowledge it has helped citizens develop to action

through the planning, implementation and evaluation of carefully selected social marketing best management practices designed to reduce non-point source pollution in the region. As a result of this project:

- Behavior change best management practices (BMPs) will be tested in the Bangor Urbanized Area.
- Documentation of BMP performance will be shared with other municipalities, stormwater groups, and watershed groups within the State of Maine and throughout New England.
- Behavior change techniques will be selected based on knowledge of the latest social marketing research and techniques, evaluated with scientific rigor, and build on BASWG's existing trove of data about regional perceptions, knowledge, barriers and behaviors regarding stormwater pollution.
- Short- and long-term behavior change activities will be planned and coordinated at the regional level.

PROJECT PLAN

The BASWG will undertake a 12-month milestone-driven collaborative planning project to develop a coordinated five-year Regional Behavior Change Plan. During this process, they will also develop pilot social marketing projects, assessing impact, feasibility

and transferability. These pilot projects will likely include the development of commonly employed social marketing techniques such as behavior change prompts, commitments, and incentives. This project will be designed to help the members of the BASWG's education committee receive training so that once the plan is developed and the pilots completed, members of the BASWG will have the skills and knowledge to sustain the collaboration's behavior change work with limited assistance.



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