



SASWA PROGRESS REPORT FOR 2023

HISTORY OF THE SASWA

In 1987, Congress amended the Clean Water Act (CWA) to require implementation of a national program for addressing stormwater discharges from municipalities, industry, and construction sites. The program was designed in two phases. **Phase I** required National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for stormwater discharge from sources including **medium** and **large** Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) serving populations of 100,000 or more and several categories of industrial activity, including construction activity that disturbs five or more acres of land. **Phase II** of the stormwater program requires permits for stormwater discharges from specific **small** municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) serving Urbanized Area (UA) populations of 50,000 or more, and construction activity generally disturbing between one and five acres.

The term MS4 does not solely refer to municipally owned storm sewer systems, but rather has a much broader application that can include, in addition to local jurisdictions, State departments of transportation, universities, local sewer districts, hospitals, school districts, military bases, and prisons. In 2012 the State of Michigan began defining an MS4 as pipe systems, surface conveyance systems and roadside drainage. Open county or agricultural drains are considered “waters of the state”.

Based upon the 2000 Census Bureau information, the following municipalities in Saginaw County were automatically designated as an Urban Area, and therefore were required to secure a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit by March 10, 2003.

Buena Vista Charter Township
Bridgeport Charter Township
Saginaw Charter Township
Spaulding Township
Carrollton Township
City of Zilwaukee
Thomas Township

Saginaw County Public Works Commissioner
City of Saginaw
Tittabawassee Township
Kochville Township
James Township
Saginaw County Road Commission

State agencies in Saginaw County, such as the Michigan Department of Transportation and Department of Corrections obtained permits through their parent organizations and have permits in place for their locations throughout the state. Birch Run Township, part of the Flint Urbanized Area, opted to not join the Saginaw Area Storm Water Authority (SASWA).

School districts located within the Urbanized Areas were also required to obtain an NPDES permit by March 10, 2003. The school districts that were located within the UA are as follows:

City of Saginaw Schools
Saginaw Township Schools
Carrollton Township Schools
Bridgeport-Spaulding Township Schools
Swan Valley Schools
Buena Vista Schools – **No longer a school district**
Freeland Schools
Saginaw Intermediate School District

Additionally, Saginaw Valley State University became a member of the SASWA based on the Urbanized Area encompassing the campus in Kochville Township.

The former Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), now Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) had to develop criteria for school districts with campuses that were not entirely within the UA. Based on the definition developed, all school districts listed above were inspected and the following school districts were eliminated from having to obtain a permit based on the 2000 census: *(NOTE: this changed with the 2010 Census Bureau and may change when the 2020 census data is completed)*

- Freeland Schools – Only one building in the UA, until the 2010 census; they have now opted to be nested under Tittabawassee Township’s Permit.
- City of Saginaw Schools – All schools are within a combined sewer district and under a City permit.

Other changes which occurred based on either court rulings or census changes are as follows:

Based on a lawsuit filed and won by Comstock and Kalamazoo Townships, if a township’s municipal buildings are not within an Urbanized Area and no other municipal properties with a dendritic MS4 are in the Urbanized Area, then the township is exempt. This ruling allowed James, Spaulding, and Birch Run Townships to be removed from the permit list. With the release of the 2010 Census Bureau urbanized area, the same situation occurred for Kochville Township and a letter was provided to the then MDEQ to rescind their permit. This may change in the next census of 2020. The Urbanized Area data from the 2020 census is not available currently.

The purpose of the Saginaw Area Storm Water Authority is to provide guidance to participating members and provide a method to share in some of the associated costs. Each participating community is responsible for costs that do not benefit the Authority as a whole. The authority was formed under Public Act 230 of 1955 and was modeled after the Mid-Michigan Waste Authority and Northwest Utilities Authority.

For additional information about the SASWA and its programs, please use SASWA’s website at:

www.saswa.org

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The Saginaw Area Storm Water Authority (SASWA) held five General Board Meetings and three Executive Board Meetings in 2023. The NPDES MS4 permits that have been issued to members to date were valid until 2023 and all members with active permits were required to renew the permit by April 2023 to maintain a consistent schedule. The members listed below have completed the permit renewal process and have had a permit issued or are in the process of being issued by EGLE.

Members with Issued Permits

- Saginaw Charter Township
- City of Saginaw
- Bridgeport Charter Township
- Thomas Township
- Saginaw Intermediate School District
- Saginaw County Public Works
Commissioner
- Saginaw Valley State University
- Swan Valley Public Schools
- Tittabawassee Township
- Bridgeport Spaulding Public Schools
- City of Zilwaukee
- Carrollton Township
- Buena Vista Township

The SASWA continues to utilize EGLE's online database management system for submitting permit applications, compliance reporting for permits, and a tracking system. It should be noted that MiWaters changed its name and is now the MiEnviro Portal system located at the same website as before. The general public is still able to view documents in MiEnviro Portal that EGLE has deemed a "public" document. Most of the items produced by the SASWA for implementation of its best management practices will be able to be viewed by the public. The approved documents are also available on the SASWA website.

EGLE Audits of SASWA Members

No EGLE audits were performed during 2023. Per EGLE staff, all SASWA members are up to date with audits and given the timeframes for EGLE required audits, EGLE does not anticipate any audits in 2024.

Public Education

SASWA members used the display board and associated brochures once again this year for public education efforts. Membership signup for the display board was a success with 17 of 23 available two-week sign-up slots being filled for the 2023 calendar year. Fifteen different SASWA members signed up for at least one slot for the display board exhibition at their office. The display board was also revamped at the end of 2022 with updated brochures and a more cohesive design to match the website. A QR code was added to lead the public to the website for more information. There is still an emphasis on online resources and improving educational content for the public. The current content available on the SASWA website is information on how to protect the watershed with pertinent examples, such as tips on, lawn care, pet waste, and car washing. Additional information and activities are available for homeowners, commercial property owners, and children.

2023 marked the last year of the SASWA NPDES permits during which SASWA committed to complete a public survey to gauge knowledge on a variety of topics that would then be used to focus future outreach. This survey was available online on the SASWA website from January through July and was also the topic of a blog post. Overall, over 65 Michigan residents responded to this survey and most people answered the questions correctly. A full summary and breakdown of all question responses was provided to members.

SASWA Website

The SASWA website (www.saswa.org), has been an integral part of getting information to members and the public alike during 2023. Just like in years past, public notice documents, educational materials, and stormwater management plans were made available on the website. Training materials for SASWA members on the website are reviewed and updated annually and have plans for a video training that is currently in the works. If there are any suggestions for improving the SASWA website, please reach out to your SASWA representative or contact us directly through the website.

Community Newsletters/ Social Media Postings

Every quarter, SASWA posts a new blog post focusing on education about stormwater. Members and the public can share these blogs on their social media pages. In addition to the SASWA blog posts, if you have a community newsletter or social media page and would like to assist the SASWA to meet its Public Education goals in 2024, please let your SASWA representative know, and they will obtain articles for placement in community newsletters or social media pages. These efforts will also help communities with any future stormwater audits that may occur.

Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping Efforts

SASWA hosted a comprehensive training in 2019. These trainings are intended for public works, grounds maintenance, building maintenance and custodial staff who may encounter stormwater during the course of their work activities (i.e., anything outside). The trainings were structured in a way that staff can be rotated and not away for the entire workday. The following topics were covered during the training sessions with the same material covered at each session: NPDES Phase II overview including the six minimum measures, Illicit Discharge Elimination Program (IDEP) Training, Spill Prevention and Clean-up, Construction Site Best Management Practices (BMPs), and Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping. The trainings are evaluated using pre and post tests and the results get compiled as a unit of measurement for comparison purposes. These trainings are a required part of the NPDES MS4 permit, and staff has attended these sessions in the past. Moving forward, members suggested that video recordings of the large group trainings be made available on the SASWA website for access at any time to allow for greater flexibility in providing training to staff.

The Road Commission began their Catch Basin Inspection Program in 2020 as part of the NPDES MS4 permit application. This program has helped to proactively determine areas of concern and to address any catch basin maintenance issues. The SCRC will continue this program throughout this permit cycle. The City of Saginaw continues its programs of cleaning materials from the restrictor plates in the street catch basins, street sweeping program, and catch basin cleaning programs. The SASWA had a team from Spicer Group inspect catch basins on township, school district, and county properties in the Urbanized Area of Saginaw. All structural stormwater controls scheduled for inspection in 2023 were completed, including those on Saginaw Valley State University's campus. Each member received a summary map indicating if any cleaning or maintenance was needed for their structures. The approved catch basin inspection program with the new NPDES permits for all SASWA members, began in 2021.

The sediment removed from street sweeping and catch basin cleaning usually has pollutants attached to it such as heavy metals like lead, chromium, zinc, aluminum, petroleum products, and nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen. These materials impact our water resources. For example, the 888 tons of sediment from street sweeping and catch basin cleaning are estimated to contain 754 pounds of phosphorus. Phosphorus is a limiting nutrient in freshwater, so if it becomes available in freshwater, aquatic plants and algae grow at a rapid rate. One pound of phosphorus can yield up to 10,000 pounds of algae /aquatic vegetation. The algae and aquatic vegetation, when it dies off, is the source of organic muck in lakes and

ivers; most of this goes out to Saginaw Bay. These efforts are helping us preserve our water resources and help reduce the probability of having harmful algal blooms in Saginaw Bay.

IDEP dry weather screening was also done during 2023. For ease of tracking and to ensure all outfall/point of discharge sources are inspected during a permit cycle, the SASWA outfalls and points of discharge were divided into five sections (one to be completed each year of the permit cycle). In 2023, the third year of inspections were completed with 74 outfalls and points of discharge inspected. The remaining outfalls/points of discharge will be screened in the coming years according to the approved schedule. Of the sources screened, eight needed a follow-up visit and of those eight, two needed to have water quality sampling completed. One of the outfalls belonging to the SCRC was identified as a potential illicit connection based on the measured water quality parameters. SCRC has been in coordination with EGLE to address this issue and has been providing regular updates at each meeting.

There was one spill reported during the year within SASWA member's boundaries. The incident was a gasoline leak into a storm sewer. Staff arrived promptly on site to apply an oil absorbent and clean up the area. Once all the absorbent had been given adequate time to work it was swept up and disposed of properly by the Kochville Township Fire Department. The clean-up process was documented and EGLE was notified that the spill occurred, and documentation was provided to them.

Respectfully Submitted,



Daryl Gotham
Chair - SASWA