

**NORTH CASTLE CONSERVATION BOARD**  
**HIGHLIGHTS on WATERSHED PROTECTION**

The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clean Air Act was in 2002. October 18<sup>th</sup> was declared National Water Monitoring Day, which we will honor each year.

*What is a watershed?*

A watershed is a particular topographical and physical area in which water, solids, sediments, and dissolved materials ultimately drain to a common place, a water body that may be a stream, river, pond, lake, reservoir, sound or ocean. We all live in a watershed. Westchester County lies between the Hudson River watershed and Long Island Sound watershed. The many reservoirs in the County have separate watersheds. North Castle lies within the Kensico-Bronx River, Byram-Wampus, Byram Lake, Mianus and Croton watersheds.

*Why is it important to protect the watersheds?*

Diffuse sources of runoff may carry pollutants such as sediment, salts, pesticides, fertilizers, and heavy metals into water sources. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, this "nonpoint" pollution is the leading cause of water pollution. Since all North Castle residents rely on ground water (wells) for drinking, it is important to protect the quality of water by protecting the watershed.

*How can you help?*

- Use plants for landscaping that require a minimum amount of water and fertilizers.
- Only use the amounts of fertilizers that are necessary, and learn IPM (Integrated Pest Management) rather than rely only on pesticides.
- Stabilize soil with erosion controls to prevent loss of soil by water or wind. This can be done by immediately seeding and mulching the disturbed soil.
- During construction or landscaping, use sediment controls to prevent runoff into wetland buffers, wetlands or streams.
- Pick up and properly dispose of pet waste.
- Check cars for leaking oil and other fluids, and make necessary repairs and never dispose of oil onto the ground or down a drain.
- Dispose of hazardous wastes properly.
- Team up with neighbors to learn about and protect your watershed.

Water quality degradation from increased pollution has an impact on habitat, fish, wildlife and on human health. *It is your drinking water—protect it!*