

# MAKING WATER SMART

## What Makes Stormwater a Resource?



### 2026 High School Video Contest Fact Sheet

The 15-county metro Atlanta region has a unique water story. The region sits at the headwaters of six major river basins. The headwaters are the smallest part of a river. So, our region has the smallest available surface water supply source of any major metropolitan area in the country. We rely almost entirely on surface water (rivers, lakes, and streams, fed by rainfall) to meet our water needs, which is why responsible water management and conservation are so critical. Metro area utilities, schools, and businesses are essential participants in the conservation and protection of our water resources. Since the creation of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District in 2001, per capita water use (i.e. the water used per person) in the District has decreased by more than 30%.

Just as water keeps metro the region going, individuals and communities play an important part in keeping water sources and watersheds safe and clean by being good stewards and practicing water conservation. In the region, where nearly all our drinking water comes from surface water, stormwater plays an important role in replenishing our water supply. Stormwater is rain or melted snow that flows over the land. A watershed is the land that drains into a stream, river, lake or other body of water. When managed properly, they also provide clean water for drinking, bathing, public safety, and even recreation that supports the economy and fun activities in our communities.

As hard (impervious) surfaces such as roads, concrete, or buildings increase, there are fewer opportunities for rainfall to naturally soak into the environment, which can make it necessary to manage stormwater as it runs off the built environment. Early stormwater management systems like pipes and ditches were created to manage stormwater quantity (volume of water), but did not always consider water quality. More recently, well-managed stormwater management systems incorporate both volume of water and water quality, while poorly-managed systems can negatively impact aquatic ecosystems and stream health.

## 2026 High School Video Contest Topic

This year's high school video contest topic asks you to consider the ways stormwater is a resource. Often stormwater is talked about in terms of flooding or water pollution, but what are some other ways we can talk about stormwater and what are some of its benefits? Using the resources provided, create a PSA-style video about the importance of stormwater and stormwater management to metro Atlanta's water supply. Your video should consider the environmental benefits of stormwater management, or how stormwater can have an important role in replenishing our region's water supply. The video should last between 30-60 seconds and is due May 8, 2026.

## What else do you need to know while creating your videos?

While there is unlimited creative potential in the video you produce, you should use reputable sources and good data to back up your ideas. Below, the Metro Water District has provided some resources for you to use. You may also consider speaking with a representative from your local water utility.

## Resources

- » [Metro Water District Website](#)
- » [Stormwater In Our Region](#)
- » [Georgia Stormwater Manual Best Management Practices \[examples\]](#) – The Georgia Stormwater Management Manual provides many solutions for stormwater management practices that manage stormwater runoff and improve water quality.
- » [Georgia DFIRM Mapping Tool](#) – This tool is designed to help property owners, community officials, and other stakeholders identify and understand flood risks in specific areas.

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