



Steuben County Water Quality Coordinating Committee

The Water Quality Committee brings together many organizations interested in countywide water quality concerns. We work together to:

- Educate** communities about nonpoint source pollution and strategies for protecting water quality;
- Assess** and verify water quality, stream stability, and the condition of watersheds and subwatersheds;
- Protect** wetlands, riparian buffer zones, infiltration areas, agricultural resources, unique natural areas, and flood storage areas; and
- Manage** land and water resources to protect water quality, reduce flood risks, and maintain stable stream systems.

Photo source: Steuben County, <http://cdn3.wn.com/pd/0e/61/>



As the demand for fresh water resources grows, and as watershed activities increase, we are continually faced with the challenge of managing the quality of water in Steuben County.

Water has an important economic value. All of our residents depend on fresh water resources for drinking water. In addition, many tourists visit our area for fishing, boating, swimming, and our scenic vistas. Protecting our water resources is important.

Learn more about how you can become more active in your community's protection of its water resources—visit our website!

Steuben County Water Quality Coordinating Committee

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Photo source: <http://www.thehomeinspector.com/>

Water Quality in Steuben County

Water Quality Coordinating Committee



Improving and maintaining the
quality of our county's water

Non-point Source Pollution

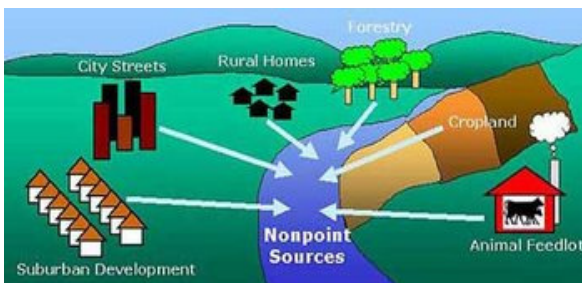
The water quality in Steuben County's streams, rivers, and lakes is generally good; however, pollution does occur.

Most pollution in the county is from non-point sources, meaning that it originates from many diffuse sources rather than from a single pipe or location. Sources of non-point pollution include failing septic systems, excessive lawn chemicals, stormwater and agricultural runoff, among others.

Pollution from non-point sources can threaten groundwater quality, as well as the water in streams, rivers, lakes, and wetlands. Solutions to preventing both surface and groundwater pollution from non-point sources lie in assisting land users and local officials in making informed decisions about the effects of land activities on water quality.

A coordinated, comprehensive, interagency approach is required to achieve successful results in non-point source control. In Steuben County, the Water Quality Committee provides the forum groups to work together on planning, data collection and analysis, education, and technical assistance projects.

The Committee's goal is to **protect and enhance the quality of surface and groundwater resources in Steuben County.**



Nonpoint source pollution is difficult to control because it comes from many different sources and locations.

Image Source: NOAA, <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/>

Water Quality Problems

- **Excessive sedimentation** in water bodies due to high flows, bank erosion, highway maintenance, construction, gravel driveways, agricultural erosion, logging, or resource extraction
- **Nutrient runoff** from agriculture, onsite wastewater systems, and developed areas
- **Pesticide runoff** from agriculture and developed areas
- **Salt runoff** from storage areas and road use
- **Invasive species** that disrupt aquatic habitat
- **Hazardous substances** from spills, landfills, unsafe disposal, and point discharges
- **Drainage changes** due to development, roadways, pipelines, resource extraction, and water withdrawal
- **Flooding** that causes erosion, septic system failure, spills, and contaminated agricultural runoff (in addition to flood damage)
- **Disturbance of stream systems** by alteration of channels or floodplains in a manner that disrupts the stream's energy and triggers increased erosion and deposition

Activities of Concern

- **Road and driveway construction**
- **New/existing development**
- **Agriculture**
- **Resource extraction**
- **Timber harvesting**
- **Disturbance of channels and stream banks**
- **Development in riparian corridors/floodplains**
- **Onsite wastewater systems**
- **Hazardous material handling/disposal**
- **Salt storage**
- **Point discharges**

Water Quality Objectives

1. *Promote public education about water quality issue.*
2. *Establish and expand programs to assess water quality and evaluate the effectiveness of restoration and protection measure.*
3. *Promote land use decisions and project design that preserve and restore hydrologic functions (wetlands, riparian buffer zones, infiltration areas, and flood storage areas).*
4. *Develop watershed-based management plans that protect water quality, reduce flood risks, and maintain stable stream systems.*
5. *Maintain roads in a manner that prevents erosion, protects streams, and maintains stable drainage patterns.*
6. *Promote sustainable drainage patterns and effective stormwater management for new and existing development in order to minimize the impacts on water quality.*
7. *Control agricultural non-point sources of pollution.*
8. *Promote timber harvesting practices that prevent erosion and protect streams and wetlands.*
9. *Reduce the water quality impacts (drainage patterns, sediment, water use, contamination, etc.) of mining, gas drilling, and other resource extraction activities.*
10. *Promote stream management practices that maintain or restore the dynamic equilibrium of stream systems.*
11. *Protect and restore the naturally beneficial functions of undeveloped floodplains and vegetated riparian corridors.*
12. *Reduce onsite wastewater system failure.*
13. *Minimize and remediate unsafe disposal and spills of hazardous substances.*
14. *Reduce salt runoff from roads and storage facilities.*
15. *Monitor permitted point discharges.*
16. *Control invasive species in lakes, streams, and riparian areas.*