

Conservation Corner

Each year La Plata gets approximately 40 inches of rain. That translates to over 4,830,000,000 gallons of water which washes over our community every year. The rain helps to nourish our plants, keep our soils moist, inhibit wind erosion, and clean the air. All of this water also washes dirt, wastes, garbage, pesticides, fertilizers, petroleum, and other contaminants from our properties and roadways. The contaminants flow over ground and through existing storm water pipes into our creeks and streams. The water continues into the Potomac River and eventually the Chesapeake Bay, along with the grit and wastes that we leave on the ground.

One of the simplest things you can do to help is to secure your trash. Ensure your trash and recyclables do not blow out of their containers by using trash cans with lids that are securely fastened, or placing heavy items on top of lighter material in your recycling container. If there is trash on the ground, either in your neighborhood or where you walk, take a moment to pick it up. Many walkers in La Plata bring a small bag with them to pick up items as they walk. Debris blows throughout our community and eventually ends up in lower areas where streams carry it further out. This pollutes our waterways.

Most importantly, do not litter. Cigarette butts, food wrappers, beverage containers, and plastic bags are among the most common items seen on the ground. These come from members of our community who may not think about where the trash will end up. It not only makes our community unsightly, but it has an environmental impact as well. Use a trash receptacle in your neighborhood, carry your trash to home or work and dispose of it there, do not throw anything out of your car window or as you walk through the community. Respect for your neighbors and community leads to respect of the larger environment.

Thank you for your help in keeping pollutants out of the storm water system and our environment.

