



Calvert County News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Watershed Stewards Academy Comes to Calvert County

PRINCE FREDERICK, Md. – Aug. 28, 2020 – The Calvert County Department of Public Works invites citizens to participate in the inaugural Calvert County Watershed Stewards Academy (WSA). The program, run by University of Maryland Extension in partnership with Calvert County Government, will begin in the fall.

The WSA is a program that trains adult community leaders in ways to reduce polluted stormwater runoff, improve local water quality and help Maryland to meet its requirements for reductions in nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment. The program is based on a successful model implemented in Anne Arundel, Cecil, Harford, Howard and St. Mary's counties and the National Capitol region.

To achieve the designation of Master Watershed Steward, participants will complete an intensive 16-session training program consisting of classroom and hands-on fieldwork, a class project and an individual capstone project in their community. Once trained, Master Watershed Stewards will work with other members of their communities to:

- Assess watersheds to help identify sources of pollution and restoration opportunities;
- Educate their community on pollution sources and how to reduce them;
- Implement small-scale stormwater management practices such as installing rain barrels or constructing rain gardens;
- Inspect and/or maintain small-scale stormwater management best management practices; and

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- Connect communities with environmental resources and people who can help restore watersheds.

The inaugural Calvert County WSA class is expected to start Oct. 6, 2020 and continue on the first and third Tuesdays each month through spring 2021. Classes will be held primarily online and field sessions will be determined pending Centers for Disease Control, university, state and county guidelines for preventing the spread of COVID-19.

There will be an enrollment fee of \$100 to help defray the cost of materials that will be used in the course. Scholarships may be available for applicants if the enrollment fee represents a financial hardship. Enrollment in the WSA class will be limited to 18 participants. The program is offered on a non-discriminatory basis. Anyone who is interested is welcome to apply, however, priority will be given to Calvert County residents. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Anyone interested in applying to participate in the WSA program to become a Master Watershed Steward can learn more by registering for a virtual information meeting and visiting <https://go.umd.edu/CalvertWSA> or by contacting WSA Coordinators Nicole Basenback at 410-535-3662 or by email at nicoleb@umd.edu, or Jackie Takacs at 240-393-6508 or by email at jtakacs@umd.edu. Applications must be submitted by Sept. 9, 2020.

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