

Improving Floyd County's drinking water

Written by Administrator

Tuesday, 21 December 2010 00:00 - Last Updated Tuesday, 21 December 2010 15:05

The Floyd County and New Albany Stormwater Boards have been busy this year. Efforts are being made to improve the water quality in Floyd County and New Albany. These efforts include education/outreach to the public, improvement projects and maintenance to the stormwater systems .

An audit of the stormwater program was conducted this year by Reggie Korthals of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). She was here to see if Floyd County and New Albany met the requirements that were outlined in our Stormwater Quality Management Plan. The boards were given an outline that needed to be filled in and submitted before the audit took place. This included information on education/outreach, mapping of the stormwater system, monitoring of construction, and good housekeeping.

There were two main parts to the audit. The first half involved giving an overview presentation of what the departments have been doing to follow the guidelines of our stormwater permits. The second part of the audit involved inspections of municipally owned facilities to see if the good housekeeping guidelines were being followed. In New Albany, the Street Department garage and NAFC Parks Department garage were inspected. In Floyd County ,the Highway Department garage and 4H Fairgrounds were inspected. Currently, the Floyd County and New Albany Stormwater Boards are waiting for the results of the audits.

Maintenance of our stormwater systems is important to the Floyd County and New Albany Stormwater Boards. In Floyd County and New Albany, there are miles and miles of the stormwater system that has to be maintained. This is not an easy task to take on, but both Floyd County and New Albany are working hard to maintain and fix problems with the system. Some of the efforts that have taken place this year are the use of vac-trucks, street sweepers and addressing drainage problems with the system.

A vac-truck is a piece of equipment that is used to clear debris and sediment from storm drain lines and culverts. The truck is equipped with a hose that runs down the pipe and shoots high pressure water. This water dislodges the debris and sediment and then the vacuum is used to suck up the debris and sediment. The debris and sediment is then properly disposed. Also, to prevent sediment and debris from getting into the stormwater systems, New Albany uses a street sweeper. In 2010, New Albany has collected 1,776 cubic yards of debris from the streets using the street sweeper.

The New Albany Stormwater Board has been designing a constructed wetland to detain stormwater runoff that is flooding many houses. The wetland will be installed near the park at the corner of Grantline Rd. and Mt. Tabor Rd. Not only will this wetland be used to help with flooding but it will also be used to educate about the benefits of a wetland. Floyd County worked on a project to help with drainage along Paoli Pike and several culverts were replaced. Both Floyd County and New Albany have been working to fix infrastructure throughout the stormwater system.

Another goal of the stormwater programs in Floyd County and New Albany is stormwater education. The Floyd County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) help out with these efforts. The Floyd County SWCD offers a program to the schools on stormwater. This year they have spoken with 512 students throughout NAFC Schools. The Floyd County SWCD also gives out educational material at different events. This year we had a booth at the Floyd County 4H Fair with information on rain barrels, stormwater activity books, flood insurance, and how you can help keep stormwater clean. This information was also given out at Harvest Homecoming.

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At the NAFC Library, there is a display set up on what you can do to help keep stormwater clean. Along with the display the SWCD also had a workshop on Rain Gardens and gave away two rain barrels.

These are some of the many things that have been done this year to improve the water quality in Floyd County and New Albany. A lot of this work is ongoing but we are coming up with new ideas on how to improve the stormwater programs. If you are interested in stormwater there will opportunities to get involved in this up coming year.