



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (6-10-2019)

STORM DRAIN STENCILING PROJECT AIMS TO REDUCE WATER POLLUTION

Next (Monday) (6-10-2019), you might see a group of people painting a white stencil near storm drain inlets in your neighborhood. These volunteers are participating in a project to bring awareness to residents that dumping in storm drains pollutes lakes, rivers, bays and streams. The City of Fergus Falls is sponsoring this project as part of its effort to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

Much of the pollution in areas streams and lakes comes from common, every-day materials, like household chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides, gasoline, used motor oil and antifreeze and litter. These substances are washed by rainwater from our streets, yards, driveways and parking lots into storm drain inlets. Contrary to what many people think, these storm drains don't lead to wastewater treatment plants. They carry untreated storm water directly into area lakes and streams.

Deliberate dumping of hazardous materials into storm sewers makes the pollution problem worse. Motor oil is often dumped down storm drains, yet just one quart can ruin the quality of 250,000 gallons of water. Dumping oil and other hazardous substances is illegal in Fergus Falls. Residents are encouraged to recycle these materials instead.

The stenciled message SAVE THE LAKE is there to remind citizens not to dump waste into storm sewers or contribute more pollutants to ordinary storm water runoff by littering, overfertilizing or sweeping yard debris into the street.

Municipal Storm Water Manager Matt Harrington pointed out that storm drain stenciling has been used successfully in others cities to reduce nonpoint source pollution. "Every citizen has a role in preventing pollution," he said. "These kinds of projects work because they get government, volunteer groups and businesses working together to solve a common problem."

Fergus Falls Highschool students Ethan Rhode & Madison Hubert will be stenciling storm drains in the neighborhoods of the Lake Alice Watershed on 6-10-2019.

Area businesses and government agencies are welcome to sponsor or volunteer for this event in the future.

For more information, call Matt Harrington MS4 Manager at (218) 332-5421.