

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What can I do on my property to improve water quality?**

**Answer:** Find any and all ways to repurpose rain water. Install a rain barrel and use the water you collect to wash your car, or water your plants. Also, check out the **BLUE CVT** program— more details on the inside panel!

**Q: Can I have my stormwater utility fee automatically deducted from my bank account, like I do with my property taxes?**

**Answer:** Currently the answer is no, however we have begun to look into this and are hopeful that we can offer this service in the future.

*Below: Examples of Residential Rain Barrels*



## Water Quality Testing

Annual water quality testing at public recreation areas will again be conducted this summer. The testing will occur over ten weeks beginning mid-June and continuing through the end of August. 12 Samples are taken on Mondays and Wednesdays and sent to a water quality testing lab to ensure the waters are safe for swimming and other recreational sports.

In the unlikely event of a beach closure, signs will be posted at swimming areas and additional tests will be completed until it is determined the water is safe for swimming. Tests results and a map of testing locations are available on the stormwater utility website.

## Stormwater Utility Information

The Town's stormwater utility began in 2017 as part of the Malletts Bay Initiative. The utility implements clean water programs, manages capital projects, and oversees regulations designed to improve and protect the community's water resources. For more info:

[www.colchestervt.gov/1837/StormwaterUtility](http://www.colchestervt.gov/1837/StormwaterUtility)

Water Quality Hotline: **(802)-264-5628**

General stormwater inquiries: **(802)-264-5620**

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# CLEAN WATER NEWSLETTER

**Town of Colchester**  
Stormwater Utility

## CLEAN WATER NEWSLETTER SPRING 2021



*Above: A view looking back at Colchester while walking on the causeway.*

**Do Not FEAR.. Warmer Temperatures are HERE!**

In this latest Clean Water Newsletter from the Colchester Department of Public Works, we will be discussing:

- Spring Yard Cleanup Tips
- BLUE® CVT Program
- Upcoming/ Completed Stormwater Utility Projects
- Summer Water Quality Testing

## Did You Know?

The Public Works Department's Smith Creek Water Quality Study was recently featured by the American Public Works Association. To check out the article, visit [tinyurl.com/ColchesterVTStudy](http://tinyurl.com/ColchesterVTStudy)

## Spring Yard & Brush Cleanup Tips

### 1. Keep and use your Lawn Clippings

Yard waste is a major source of pollution in surface waters. Leaves and lawn clippings make their way to streams and rivers, raising nitrogen and phosphorus levels to the point where it can be dangerous for most aquatic wildlife.

When mowing your lawn, keep clippings off of sidewalks, streets, and driveways. If unable to mulch your clippings, bag the clippings and store them in a compost area where the organic material can be used as a fertilizer as a later date.

**Please do not dump yard waste along streams, near catch basins, or near storm drains.**

### 2. Clean up after pets!

Pet waste that is left on the landscape to decompose contains bacteria that is harmful to waterways. Pick up pet waste and place in the garbage, or look into dog waste composting—there are dog-specific, affordable and effective options available.



### 3. Remove leftover winter salt or sand

Salt and sand are another growing hazard to waterways. Increased salt levels in surface waters can raise salinity levels high enough to kill vegetation and endanger marine wildlife. Please check your site to ensure excess salt or sand from the winter is removed or stored out of the rain for next season. The Town does this on our 91 miles of roadways using the street sweeper.

### 4. Fertilize with care

Consider testing your soil to be sure fertilizer is needed. \$15 soil tests are offered by UVM—call 656-3030 for more information. Use fertilizers sparingly and sweep up any that falls on driveways, sidewalks and walkways. Excess fertilizer will wash away in spring rains, polluting your local waterways with phosphorus and wasting your hard earned money. **Avoid spreading fertilizers on windy days, or days where it is going to rain.**

## Upcoming Water Quality Projects

### – Galvin Hill and Coon Hill Drainage Work

This summer 2021 project involves roadway improvements including restoration of roadside ditches, installing new culverts and headwalls, and replacing older culverts. These 80% grant funded improvements will be occurring along approximately 1,350 feet of roadway on Coon Hill Road, and 1,000 feet of Galvin Hill Road.

### – Police Station Outfall Improvements

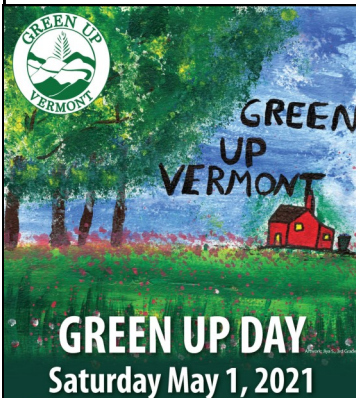
This project includes repair work on a Town-owned outfall located behind the Police Station that drains 3.7 acres of impervious surface to Smith Creek. The Public Works Department has received 100% grant funding for this construction project from the State of VT. Construction will take place between early June and late August 2021.

### – Stormwater Pipe Lining

Over the next two months the Department of Public Works will be overseeing the lining of 1,000 linear ft of stormwater piping. This is a less costly method of restoring the structural integrity of these pipes than having to dig up public roadways, which eliminates traffic disruptions and minimizes costs to utility customers.

## May 1st: Green Up Day

Green Up Day 2021 is Saturday, May 1st! Green up bags will be available for contactless pickup at the Police Station beginning April 24th. A sign-up sheet will be located outside the front entrance for people to put # of bags taken, # of people helping and location of trash pickup. Bags can be left on the side of any public road in a place where town staff and a truck can safely stop—and not on the bike path or school grounds, if that's the area being cleaned. Bags can also be dropped off in the container in front of the town offices by May 2nd. Metal should be kept separate and placed **next to** the bags along with other bulky items. Thank you in advance to all who volunteer to keep our community clean and green!



## BLUE® CVT Program

Year 3 of BLUE® CVT has begun!

Residential properties under 4 units are eligible to apply for this program that provides financial rebates for stormwater improvements constructed. A BLUE® CVT employee trained in stormwater mitigation strategies will arrange an appointment to survey your property and discuss any water quality concerns you may have. They'll provide a detailed report with recommendations for your site. If you choose to implement any of the recommendations, you'll receive a rebate!



The site evaluation, report, and recommendations are provided **FREE**— **there is no obligation to construct improvements after an evaluation.** Should you choose to construct any of the improvements recommended, rebates as high as \$1,500 are available depending on the project type and your property's connectivity to surface waters.

New this year: The property who mitigates the most amount of stormwater runoff will receive a **bonus \$100!** For more information, visit [tinyurl.com/BLUECVT](https://tinyurl.com/BLUECVT).

## Stormwater Utility Billing

Annual stormwater utility invoices are mailed each January to addresses on file with the Assessor's Office. **The Department of Public Works received some of these invoices as returned to sender from the Post Office.** We will make every effort to identify and correct any address that is returned as undeliverable. However, stormwater fees are still owed even if an address on file is no longer accurate, or is not deliverable in winter months. At this time we cannot offer electronic delivery of invoices or automatic deductions. However credit and debit card payments are available—check out the stormwater utility website for more information.

**To update billing information, please call 802-264-5621 or email [kadams@colchestervt.gov](mailto:kadams@colchestervt.gov) with your preferred mailing address and Colchester site information.**