

Pipelines

FALL 2022



Protecting Our Communities Through Sustainable Practices

Regardless of where one stands on the topic of Climate Change and/or its cause(s), one thing that we can all agree on is the need to protect our communities now and into future generations. We have a finite amount of resources available to us and a delicate ecosystem to protect. Who doesn't want future generations to enjoy the amazing landscapes, features, and assets that we have across this area?

While Greene County Sanitary Engineering Department's (GCSED) mission and existence aim to tackle this challenge on a macro scale, many things can be done-by each of you-at the micro level (residential) to aid in this effort.

Here are the top 5 practices that you can incorporate at your home to help us protect our communities:

1. Reduce-Reuse-Recycle: This practice helps us to divert materials from landfills and helps us to meet Greene County Solid Waste District's goals.
- Reduce the amount of waste you produce.

- Reuse items as much as you can before replacing them.
- Recycle items wherever possible. GCSED Environmental Services offers this service at no cost to Greene County residents at our Xenia location.

2. Conserve Water: An easy way to live more sustainably is to conserve household water use by installing water-efficient appliances and fixtures, taking shorter showers/turning off the tap while you brush your teeth, and being cautious when using for external purposes.

3. Properly Dispose of Hazardous Household Wastes: One of the largest threats to our local environment is the storage and improper disposal of household hazardous wastes: paints, stains, cleaners, gasoline/kerosene, pesticides, aerosols, antifreeze, and so on. GCSED Environmental Services also offers this service at no cost to Greene County residents during special events (located at 2145 Greene Way Blvd in Xenia). Call us at (937) 562-7450 for more information on our scheduled events.

4. Avoid Disposable/Single-Use Items: Previous generations didn't dream of single-use razors, forks, cups, bags, and food storage containers. These days, you can find a plastic version of almost any object, which then gets thrown away and landfilled after it is used.

5. Get Off the Bottle and onto the Tap: In 2020, it's estimated that 15 billion gallons of bottled water were purchased and consumed in the United States. On average, a 20-ounce bottle of water costs approximately \$1.50. When translating this into gallons, bottled water costs approximately \$9.60 per gallon. GCSED's tap water costs less than \$0.01 per gallon, is just as safe, if not safer, and carries zero impact to the environment.

"But the only possible guarantee of the future is responsible behavior in the present."
~ Wendell Berry



Southwest Regional Water System

Greene County Sanitary Engineering began operations of the Southwest Regional (SWR) Water System in 1995 to provide a reliable drinking water supply in the southwest portion of Greene County Ohio. The SWR Water System service area includes Sugarcreek and Spring Valley Townships. The public drinking water supply is provided by ground water from two production wells located southwest of Spring Valley between US 42 and the Little Miami River. The SWR Water System today provides a total of 0.10 MGD based on annual averages. The SWR Water System consists of raw water pumping, chlorine disinfection, clear well storage, and high service pumping,

the distribution area consists of 17.57 miles of water main, 130 hydrants, 210 valves and 1 water tower.

One unique feature of the SWR Water System as compared to other water systems, is that the treatment quality is not achieved by typical treatment methods like filtration but rather natural methods that are sustainable with ecological benefits and cost savings to the customers. Shortly after the start up of the system in 1995, Greene County pursued and implemented an agricultural method to assist in removing elevated nitrates in the shallow aquifer in the area. Based on the concept of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Pastures to Prairies program, Greene County planted prairie grass on the 220-acre parcel that was once used to cash crop corn and soybean. The prairie grass was planted in zones as three types were used.

The theory of the prairie grass was that the deep and dense root growth would absorb nitrates from the shallow water table and from the soil as well.

After many years the prairie grass has proven its worth as expected. Today, the Ohio EPA recognizes the SWR Water System as a pristine source. The annual cost of maintaining the prairie has remained minimal, past studies have proven that the nitrate levels in the shallow water aquifer was reduced by 72% and soil reduction by 94%. The prairie continues to be an endangered wildlife area as well as a natural habitat for other wildlife. In 2012 The Groundwater Foundation designated the Greene County Spring Valley Prairie as a Groundwater Guardian Greene Site.

Recycling and Its Circular Economy

You've been told that recycling "saves the earth," but do you know the actual benefits we receive from recycling? It reduces the amount of waste in landfills, conserves natural resources, saves energy and reduces the need to collect new raw materials. But did you also know that it increases economic security by the use of a domestic source of materials that would otherwise be discarded in manufacturing and it creates new jobs? With the increase in technology, recycled materials, also known as commodities, are in greater demand than ever before.

A study performed by the EPA (Recycling Economic Information Study) found that in a single year, recycling and reuse activities in the United States accounted for:

- 681,000 jobs
- \$37.8 billion in wages; and
- \$5.5 billion in tax revenues.

This equates to 1.17 jobs for every 1,000 tons of materials recycled. (www.epa.gov/recyclingstrategy)

The current standards of recycling involves a circular economy. Commodities that are collected via curbside service and dropped off at our Environmental Services facility are first taken to a sorting hub. After being sorted into the respected categories, they are then sold to manufacturers as raw materials. And subsequently, sold on to the

consumer to begin the process again. Ninety percent of collected commodities are sent on to be reprocessed within 250 miles of Greene County and of that, eighty percent are sent to processing facilities right here in Ohio.

One of those processing facilities is Pratt Industries. The Georgia based company expanded to Wapakoneta, Ohio with a recycled paper mill in 2019 creating 300 new jobs. The site was a first of its kind. It sources most of its material from recycled mixed paper and cardboard to make new cardboard boxes and uses 425 thousand tons of it per year. Cardboard is unique in that it can be recycled up to seven times without losing its durability or resistance. So next time you are disposing of a milk jug, can or cardboard box, ask yourself, are you throwing away a resource?



Employee Spotlight

Contractors out in the field might come across Tristan Mull, our Staff Engineer. Tristan has been with the County for 14 months. Some of his roles include capital project management, facilitating regulatory permitting, scheduling, coordinating with our contractors and reviewing plans for private developers.

Tristan received his Bachelors and Masters degrees from Ohio University in civil engineering focusing on water resources and environmental engineering. He found his passion for public service after an internship in Austin, Texas, working for the National Weather Service Forecast Office. Tristan says that his role here feels impactful and beneficial to the community,

which is what ultimately drew his attention to Greene County Sanitary Engineering.

When asked what he likes best about working for Greene County Sanitary Engineering, Tristan says, "It's a good environment with friendly and genuinely good people. I also like being able to work through the tasks of the day without being micromanaged." Off the job, Tristan is a new homeowner who enjoys working out, lifting weights and computer games.

Tristan is a great addition to our team and we appreciate everything he contributes to our department!

Greene County Environmental Services Special Dates

Household Hazardous Waste Drop off Dates/Times:

October 8th - 9:00 am to 12:00 pm
October 18th - 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm
November 15th - 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm
December 13th - 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm

Tire Collection:
September 29th & October 27th
**must register with Greene Soil and Water Conservation District in advance. Call 937-416-6906 or email at greeneswcd@outlook.com.

Ways to pay your bill

Online: greencountyohio.gov/sanitary

By Phone: 855-925-1665 (24 Hr. Service)

By Mail:
Greene County Sanitary
Engineering Department
P.O. Box 340
Xenia, OH 45385-0340

Remember to update your GCSED online banking vendor address. Some banks send your payment via USPS rather than ACH transaction.

Greene County Sanitary Engineering

Administration Building
937-562-7450
Monday-Friday, 7:30 am to 4:30 pm
667 Dayton-Xenia Road
Xenia, OH 45385

After-Hours Emergencies
937-562-7450

Billing/Bill Payments
937-562-7457

greencountyohio.gov

