

NEWS RELEASE

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County, Soil & Water Conservation District Partner in Water Quality Grant Opportunities for Property Owners and HOAs

The Loudoun County government and the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District (LSWCD) are partnering in a program to provide funding to homeowners interested in implementing water quality improvement projects on their property or in their neighborhood. They will be hosting an informational meeting about applying for grants for the projects on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at Rust Library, 380 Old Waterford Road NW in Leesburg.

Subject matter experts from the Loudoun County Stormwater Management Program, LSWCD and the Virginia State Department of Forestry are scheduled to speak about the grant application process for eligible projects. The projects include:

- **Tree Planting:** Both riparian (streamside) and upland areas are eligible for funds to plant native species to reforest non-forested areas. These plantings help filter nutrients, trap sediment, provide shade and provide important habitats while reducing mowing and maintenance costs associated with turfgrass. Planting areas can be as small as one-quarter of an acre or as large as three acres for any individual project.
- **Pet Waste Stations:** Pet waste stations are designed to encourage pet owners to pick up after their animals in public places to prevent waste from being transported off-site by stormwater runoff. Pet waste stations typically include a covered waste can and bags for picking up the waste. Grants support regular maintenance fees to keep the cans empty as well as installation costs.
- **Livestock Exclusion Fencing:** Fencing helps to keep livestock out of waterways and prevents nutrient runoff from agricultural operations into the water. Farms under five acres that are not eligible for the state of Virginia's cost-share programs can access this funding.

In addition, information will be available about the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP), a water quality improvement cost-share program administered by LSWCD. VCAP funds projects to reduce erosion and runoff through actions such as rain gardens and conservation landscaping.

Private residential, industrial, commercial and homeowner associations in Loudoun are eligible to apply for funds for the projects.

Loudoun County and LSWCD have often partnered in past years on water quality projects in the county. This year's effort has been enhanced with additional grant funding from the county and the addition of pet waste stations as an eligible project.

Supporting local projects that enhance watershed conservation and promote watershed stewardship is part of the Environment and Energy Work Plan approved by the Board of Supervisors.

For more information about the county's environmental initiatives, visit loudoun.gov/environment.

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