



Blue Water Congregations

What is Polluted Runoff?

Polluted Runoff is created when rain flows over surfaces such as parking lots, sidewalks, roofs, and landscaped lawns, picking up oils and lawn chemicals along the way.

- Polluted Runoff is the only source of pollution that is increasing in the Chesapeake Bay.
- Polluted Runoff increases nutrient loads in the Chesapeake Bay, causing dead zones and algae blooms.

How can the Faith Community Address this Growing Pollution?

People look to their places of worship for guidance in matters of ethics, conscience, and service. By installing projects on their grounds to control polluted runoff, congregations serve as living witnesses to caring for Creation.

- Install rain gardens, permeable parking lots, and other projects
- Model behavior for your congregants and surrounding community
- Lead by example and watch the ripple effect of your commitment

Is your congregation ready for a Rain Garden?

This program offers you **technical and organizational support** to implement projects on your grounds.

- Installation of these projects protects our watershed and helps you **reduce your stormwater utility fees!**
- After you notify us of your interest, Blue Water Baltimore will conduct a Water Audit to determine the potential for capturing polluted runoff.
- If your site is accepted, you will then decide between two tracks of engagement:
 - **Community Visioning:** Together with Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake, community partners and other congregations, discuss – like you would around the kitchen table – the environmental concerns in your watershed and how to address them. You'll develop communications strategies to share what you've learned, identify shovel-ready projects for your grounds, and receive technical and grant-writing support to secure funding for your projects.
 - **Facilitated Action:** Move right into action and work solely with Blue Water Baltimore on developing shovel-ready projects. Receive technical and grant-writing support to secure funding for your projects.

Protecting Creation as a Matter of Faith



Funding Provided By



Who is Eligible?

Interested congregations in the Gwynns Falls watershed, Jones Falls watershed, Herring Run watershed, and Baltimore Harbor watershed are eligible.

Need More Information, or Ready to Sign Up?

Contact:

Bonnie Sorak

Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake

Bonnie@interfaithchesapeake.org

443.799.0349

Ashley Traut

Blue Water Baltimore

atraut@bluewaterbaltimore.org

410.254.1577





If your congregation has not already done so, you should check your water bill to make sure you have received your religious structure fee reduction, which provides a reduced fee of \$3/ERU/quarter for structures used exclusively for worship or K-12 education (as compared to the regular fee of \$15/ERU/quarter).

- You can find your stormwater fee by either looking at your last quarterly bill or by visiting www.cleanwaterbaltimore.org. Click on “Stormwater”, then “[\\$MarylandStormwater Fee](#)”, then “[Stormwater Fee Finder](#)” and enter your address or water bill account number.
- To apply for a reduction the applicant will be required to provide a map of the property identifying structures eligible for the discounted rate (this can be a simple Google map with the structures outlined in red) as well as proof of tax exempt (religious) status certification. From the above website go to “[Non Single Property Maryland Stormwater Credit Application](#)” for the form. Additional instructions are on the “[Non-residential and Religious Organization](#)” page.
- Additional information can be found at www.cleanwaterbaltimore.org or by calling [410-396-5398](tel:410-396-5398).

Blue Water Congregations Program Overview - 84 Congregations in Total

Community Visioning Tract-Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake Led	Facilitated Action Tract-Blue Water Baltimore Led
24 Congregations over 3 years	60 Congregations over 3 years
Technical and grant-writing support from Blue Water Baltimore	Technical and grant-writing support from Blue Water Baltimore
Classes of 5-10 Congregations on rolling cycle	Ongoing
For More information: www.interfaithchesapeake.org	For More Information: www.bluewaterbaltimore.org/blue-water-congregations
Involves stakeholders in your community, motivate from within, set environmental and aspirational goals; not limited to storm water runoff.	Develop shovel ready projects to mitigate polluted storm water runoff.
First Step - Contact: Bonnie Sorak bonnie@interfaithchesapeake.org or 443-799-0349 Cell	First Step - http://www.bluewaterbaltimore.org/audit-registration/traut@bluewaterbaltimore.org or Contact: Ashley Traut 410-254-1577 Ext. 103 to schedule a water audit