

PAPER WATERSHED

Materials:

- Paper, one sheet per person
- Water soluble markers, variety
- Spray bottle
- Something to catch the water and markers
- Like a newspaper or aluminum pans, or just go outside!

Background:

The Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources has five water treatment facilities that clean about 70 million gallons of water from Lake Lanier every day and pump it to homes, businesses, parks, and other places through the county. Then, the Department of Water Resources collects the used water from sinks, bathrooms, and factories, sends it to wastewater treatment facilities where it is cleaned up again, and returned back to Lake Lanier, the Yellow River, or the Chattahoochee River, cleaner than when it started. By recycling used water back to Lake Lanier and rivers, the

Department of Water Resources helps conserve this limited natural resource and protect our environment while providing good, clean water to residents.

Impervious surfaces like parking lots, roofs, and driveways don't allow rain to soak into the ground, which can cause flooding and allow pollution to wash into rivers, streams and lakes where we get our drinking water and where wildlife lives. Stormwater travels directly to local waterbodies and isn't treated by any facilities. This means anything that stormwater picks up – like trash or pollutants – will go directly into our lakes and streams. As a result of decades of growth and development, bodies of water in the county have been affected by flooding and erosion, land development, road construction, littering, landscaping, lawn care, and other activities. At the Department of Water Resources (DWR), we manage both stormwater quantity and quality with a combination of operational and engineering practices.

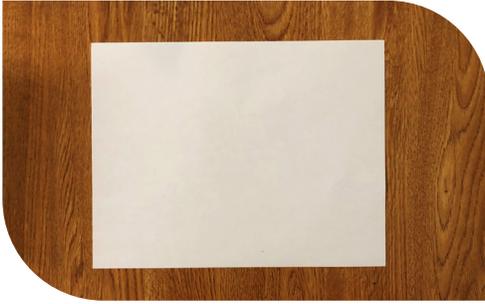
Protecting our waterways:

All of the rain that falls across the county eventually ends up in the same few water sources. Watersheds are areas or ridges of land that separate water flowing to different rivers, basins, or seas and have interconnected streams that flow one to another. Pollution discharged upstream could affect water quality downstream. Preventing stormwater pollution through responsible disposal of household wastes will go a long way towards maintaining the health of our waterways. Common pollution includes trash, pesticides and fertilizer, grass clippings and yard waste, waste from septic tanks, car wash water, and pet waste. It's important for residents to do their part to maintain the delicate balance of our local ecosystem.



Activity:

1. Give each student a piece of paper.



2. Tell them to crumple it up.



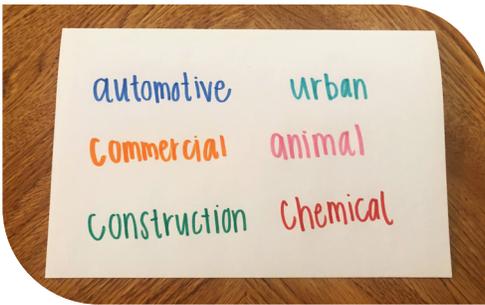
3. Lay it out flat.



4. Use the variety of colors to trace the creases in the paper.



5. Have students list which colors correspond with different pollutants. Different colors can represent different pollutants.



6. Place sheets of paper on the water catching apparatus, or on the ground outside. Use spray bottles to wet the papers.



7. Have students observe the changes in the water.

