



JEFFCO H₂O NEWS

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Green Infrastructure



Green infrastructure and low impact development (GI/LID) are approaches to stormwater management that utilize natural processes to protect, restore, or mimic the natural water cycle. This differs from traditional manmade methods like curbs, gutters and storm drains that have been constructed to carry stormwater away from developed areas (homes, businesses, streets and parking lots) as quickly as possible. This fast-moving stormwater picks up pollutants from the ground and carries it untreated into nearby waterways. Stormwater runoff from developed areas is the primary source of water pollution in rivers, creeks, lakes and streams. GI/LID practices look at stormwater as a resource to keep on site, and utilizes natural means to allow it to spread out, evaporate, soak into the ground, be taken up by plants, or be captured and stored for later use. GI/LID practices such as rain gardens, bioswales, trees, natural areas, permeable pavement and rain barrels are becoming more and more common because they are effective in managing stormwater. In addition, they also provide many [benefits](#): reduce the amount of stormwater leaving a site, prevent pollution from entering waterways, replenish groundwater, reduce irrigation needs, improve human health, improve neighborhood aesthetics, reduce urban heat islands, improve air quality, increase recreational opportunities, and increase property values. Many of the benefits derived from using GI/LID on a large scale in cities or a commercial setting also can be realized on a [smaller scale](#) at your home. Whether you add one of these elements to your landscape or many, you are helping protect water in local streams while improving your family's well-being.

What's Happening

Brown Bag Lunch & Learn Series - Birmingham Botanical Gardens - Bring your lunch and join us for this [series](#) of FREE informational seminars.

National Night Out - August 6 - The Jefferson County [Sheriff's Office](#) will host National Night Out in two locations: Center Point Courthouse and Sylvan Springs Ballpark. The free event focuses on creating a partnership between neighborhoods and law enforcement to enhance safety and crime prevention.

Electronics Drop Off Days - July 27, August 10 - Got unwanted or outdated electronics that you would like to properly dispose? Bring them to one of two FREE Electronics Drop Off events. Open to all residents of Jefferson County. Click [HERE](#) for more information, or call 325-8741.

The Intrepid Gardener

In the last issue, Hana shared her strategies for improving the soil and drainage on her property to put in place the foundational elements of a great landscape that includes native plants and water features. In this issue, we are going back to see what Wayne (AKA Mr. T) has been doing in his yard and garden. Rumor has it that there is a brand new feature in his landscape. Click [HERE](#) to find out what's been happening in Mr. T's garden.

New Publications



The Development Services Department recently created a brochure [Helpful Information for Jefferson County Residents](#) which is a collection of contact phone numbers to call in order to address the frequently asked questions that we receive from the public. While this brochure doesn't include a contact for every question, it is a resource to get you started with the right County department. A brochure titled [Good Housekeeping Practices for Business](#) is being distributed to individuals applying for or renewing a business license in Jefferson County. Businesses located within Jefferson County are required by law to use Good Housekeeping Practices in the course of doing business to prevent potential pollutants from entering the storm drainage system. Anything that is swept, blown or washed into storm drains and ditches is carried by stormwater into local waterways causing water pollution. Keeping pollutants off the ground, away from paved areas and out of the storm drainage system protects water quality as well as public health and safety. If you have a business in Jefferson County, make sure your staff is trained and uses appropriate practices on the job.

It's Your Doody



In the US, 85 million families own a pet. In 2017, there were 89.7 million dogs owned as pets in the US, and 58% of those dogs were owned by women. Alabama ranks number 7 among states with the most dog owners. It is estimated that there are about 150,000 dogs kept as pets in Jefferson County's urban and suburban areas. So what do all those statistics mean? For one thing, a lot of dog poop! Dogs in Jefferson County produce an estimated 38 TONS of waste every day. Leaving it on the ground is not a healthy option. An average pile of dog waste contains 2.5 BILLION fecal coliform bacteria as well as viruses and parasites that can infect humans and wildlife. Dog waste does not fertilize the grass like waste from other animals such as cows and chickens. Since dog waste contains so many pathogens, it should never be added to compost. We love our dogs (and our families) and want them to be happy and safe. Making sure that you properly dispose of your dog's waste is a very important part of caring for your pet. That's why it's imperative to always pick up and place dog waste in a plastic bag to keep pathogens from spreading and properly dispose of the bag in the trash. Even when no one is watching.

Littering is Stupid



How do we stop the littering problem in Jefferson County? High school students are tackling the problem and trying to make everyone understand that littering is, well, stupid. If you have a child in a public high school within Jefferson County, he or she may have participated in the *Litter Quitters* anti-litter video competition. *Litter Quitters* is a contest among Jefferson County public high schools created by a group of local governments, organizations, and nonprofits, all with the goal of eliminating littering. Twenty-two public high schools located within Jefferson County's three major watersheds participated this past school year. Each participating school created and submitted one video which was posted by *Litter Quitters* on YouTube. The students promoted their video to friends, family, and the community to obtain 'likes'. The videos with the most 'likes' received 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place cash prizes (1st \$1000; 2nd \$500; 3rd \$250; Best Overall \$250). The 1st place winners in each of the 3 watersheds were: Pinson Valley, Shades Valley, and Oak Grove, with Tarrant High School winning the Best Overall prize. Students from participating schools were featured in an anti-litter public service announcement which was filmed by and aired on ABC 33/40 during May and June. Click [HERE](#) to visit the web site, see the videos, and watch the public service announcement! And seriously, please don't litter!!!