



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Adrian Lilly
Public Information Manager
Toledo Metropolitan Area Council
of Governments
419-241-9155, ext. 106
lilly@tmacog.org

Lynnette Werning
Vice President
Sheroian Associates, Inc.
734-854-5501
lynnette@sheroian.com

PO Box 9508
Toledo, Ohio 43697-9508
(419) 241-9155

USE YOUR DRAIN BRAIN

Know how to clear wastewater without draining your wallet.

NORTHWEST OHIO, Ohio, June 4, 2004 – One drain is pretty much like another, right? *Wrong!* They may look alike on the intake end, but their contents go to very different places. The more homeowners know about the drains they use, the more they’re able to save money, avoid HUGE disasters and keep our waterways cleaner and safer.

Through a collaborative partnership, the *Give Water a Hand* program is educating residents of Northwest Ohio about easy, money-saving ways – including septic system maintenance and use of storm drains – to conserve water and protection of our streams, rivers and lakes. “Clean water benefits plants, wildlife and all who live, work and play in this area,” says Kurt Erichsen, *Give Water a Hand* Project Manager.

It’s important to know the difference between sanitary sewers and storm sewers and what each does. It’s also important to know whether your home has a sanitary sewer or a septic system. Each one is designed to carry specific types of things, and there are different limitations and maintenance requirements for each.

Here are some things you should know to protect not only local waterways, but your *wallet* as well:

There are inside drains and outside drains . . .

- **Inside drains** – inside a home, garage or other building – are connected to municipal sanitary sewers or septic systems (It’s important to know which!) so wastewater is taken to a treatment plant. Soap, bleach and cleaning fluids can harm your lawn and garden, so never direct them to a basement sump pump.

-more-

Give Water a Hand is a cooperative education effort among the following:

Maumee RAP (419-241-9155)
Toledo Metropolitan Area Council
of Governments (419-241-9155)
Lucas County (419-213-4500)
City of Northwood (419-693-9327)
City of Oregon (419-698-7047)

Village of Haskins (419-823-1911)
Village of Holland (419-865-7104)
Village of Millbury (419-836-9671)
Village of Ottawa Hills (419-536-1111)
Village of Waterville (419-878-8100)
Village of Whitehouse (419-877-5383)

Township of Jerusalem (419-836-8921)
Township of Monclova (419-865-7862)
Township of Spencer (419-865-2883)
Township of Springfield (419-865-0239)
Township of Sylvania (419-882-0031)
Township of Washington (419-726-6621)

Township of Waterville (419-878-5176)
Ohio Environmental Education Fund
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

- **Outside drains** should go into your yard, a drainage ditch or a storm drain. Never pour or empty anything into an outside drain that you wouldn't want in your drinking water. Storm drains and drainage ditches take contents – untreated – directly into local streams and rivers.

Maintenance:

- Have your septic system inspected and pumped every two to three years. Poorly maintained septic systems can fail in *as little as a single year*, leaving very expensive repairs and the potential for a serious health threat.
- Never park, drive or build anything directly over your septic system. Never drain your hot tub or pool through your septic system.

In The Yard:

- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean sidewalks and driveways, so lawn chemicals and oil from cars aren't washed into storm sewers and ditches.

In The Garage:

- Direct the drain into a sanitary sewer only – never into a septic system or storm sewer. Motor oil, automotive fluids, road salt and cleaners are harmful to septic systems and waterways. If you have a septic system, you should plug and not use your garage drain.

The *Give Water a Hand: You Can Make a Difference* campaign is a cooperative effort focused on educating residents of Northwest Ohio about storm water and other water quality issues. The average citizen does impact water quality and can make a positive difference. The Maumee RAP (Remedial Action Plan) and Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG) are partnering with local cities, villages, and townships to educate the region about improving water quality and managing water quantity.

For more information about the *Give Water a Hand* program, please call 419-241-9155 or visit us at www.MaumeeRAP.org.

###