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Clean Water Montgomery Grant Opportunity Announced for Local Nonprofits

Local groups can now apply for awards ranging from \$40,000 to \$100,000 to improve water quality

The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Trust announce \$750,000 in funding for local, community-driven initiatives to improve water quality. Through the Clean Water Montgomery Grant Program, Montgomery County nonprofit organizations including local watershed groups, homeowner and community associations, faith-based organizations, and service and civic groups may be eligible for grants ranging from \$40,000 to \$100,000 to support their projects to improve water quality and stream health.

The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Chesapeake Bay Trust have partnered for ten years to administer this program, made possible through the County's Water Quality Protection Fund.

"Through this partnership between the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection and the Chesapeake Bay Trust, we have provided \$5.6 million for 123 projects over the past 10 years," said **Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich**. "By supporting these projects that address stormwater runoff and pollution, promote education, and foster stewardship, we are empowering local organizations to play a crucial role in restoring and maintaining the health of our waterways."

Montgomery County Government has the responsibility to meet regulatory watershed restoration and water quality improvement goals. Significant effort is needed from individuals and community-based groups since the amount of privately-owned land far exceeds the amount of government-owned property. The Clean Water Montgomery Grant Program aims to broaden the diversity of people and groups involved in the restoration of the watershed to help support these goals.

"Clean Water Montgomery Grants provide residents and local organizations with the resources and support needed to take local, on-the-ground action to improve and protect our environment," said **DEP Director Jon Monger**. "In the last year, nearly \$1 million in grant funding was awarded for 23 projects throughout the County. These projects are building a strong and inclusive network of environmental stewards and leaders who are helping to improve water quality in our County."

The grant program empowers communities to lead and implement their own projects to reduce stormwater runoff and pollutants affecting water quality. Community-inspired projects will also focus on education, outreach, and stewardship. Last year's grant funding was awarded for projects such as green infrastructure and stormwater projects; pavement removal; conservation landscape plantings; engagement of diverse audiences in stewardship projects; work with and by faith-based audiences; green jobs programs; and water quality monitoring projects. This year's awardees will build on this work

to further protect the County's water quality. The grant program is now accepting proposals for projects such as planting trees, installing permeable pavers, and building rain gardens that will improve and protect local waterways.

"Our successful partnership with Montgomery County allows more resources for local nonprofit organizations to accomplish measurable, visible improvements that protect our waterways and strengthen our communities," said **Dr. Jana Davis, president of the Chesapeake Bay Trust**. "Together, we can continue to empower more local group to take action to protect the health of our environment."

The grant program will be accepting applications in the following categories:

- Project Type 1: Public outreach and stewardship projects such as knowledge building, up to \$40,000, and behavior change, up to \$60,000.
- Project Type 2: Community-based restoration projects such as parking lot replacement with permeable pavement up to \$100,000.
- Project Type 3: Tree Planting and Reforestation projects up to \$100,000.
- Project Type 4: Litter-reduction projects in the Anacostia River Watershed up to \$50,000.

Eligible projects throughout Montgomery County will be considered outside of the municipalities of Rockville, Gaithersburg and Takoma Park, as these municipalities manage their stormwater separately. Applications are due no later than **4 p.m. on Thursday, November 14, 2024**.

Applicants are encouraged to contact the Chesapeake Bay Trust to discuss their eligible project ideas prior to applying to submit the best proposals.

To learn more, register for the pre-application workshop, or review the request for proposals, visit <https://cbtrust.org/grants/cleanwatermontgomery/> or contact Kathy Somoza at 410-974-2941, extension 120.

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About Montgomery County's Department of Environmental Protection

The mission of the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection is to enhance the quality of life in our community by protecting and improving Montgomery County's air, water, and land in a sustainable way while fostering smart growth, a thriving economy, and healthy communities.

About the Chesapeake Bay Trust

The Chesapeake Bay Trust (www.cbtrust.org) envisions a restored, protected, and resilient Chesapeake Bay watershed and other natural resources in our area, from the Coastal Bays to the Chesapeake to the Youghiogheny River. The Trust empowers about 400 local community-based groups each year with the resources they need to take on a meaningful and measurable role in restoring forests, streams, rivers, bays, wildlife, and more in their own communities. The Trust is supported by the sale of the Chesapeake & Coastal Bays license plate; donations to the Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund on the Maryland State income tax form; donations made by hunters, fishers, and boaters in the Maryland online natural resource licensing system; donations from individuals and corporations; and partnerships with private foundations and federal, state, and local governments. The Trust has received the highest rating from Charity Navigator for over two decades. Over 90 cents of every dollar are directed to the Trust's restoration and education programs.

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