

# Nonpoint Source Management Program :: Neuse Nutrient Strategy: Stormwater Rule

## What Does the Neuse River Stormwater Rule Say?

The Neuse stormwater rule applies to the largest and fastest-growing local governments in the Neuse River basin. The rule establishes a broad set of objectives for reducing nitrogen runoff from urban areas. The rule also sets up a process for DWQ to work with the affected local governments to develop a model stormwater plan for meeting the objectives.

### The affected local governments are:

Cary	Smithfield
Durham	Wilson
Garner	Durham County
Goldsboro	Johnston County
Havelock	Orange County
Kinston	Wake County
New Bern	Wayne County
Raleigh	

The model plan will include four elements for reducing nitrogen (explained below):

1. Reviewing and approving stormwater management plans for new development.
2. Educating the public.
3. Identifying and removing illegal discharges.
4. Identifying sites where water quality management projects can be inserted into existing development ("retrofits").

If the rule is approved by the General Assembly, then it will become effective on August 1, 1998.

After the rule becomes effective, the local governments and DWQ will have one year to develop the model plan. Local governments will then have an additional 18 months to get their stormwater plan approved by the EMC and begin implementing the plan. If a local government doesn't implement a stormwater plan, then it may be subject to federal NPDES stormwater permitting.

Local governments will make annual progress reports to the EMC which will include nitrogen loading reduction estimates.

**Local governments and DWQ will work together to incorporate existing stormwater programs and these new nitrogen control requirements into an efficient and flexible plan for local government and economic development activities.**

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The elements that the local plans must include:

### 1. Development Review/Approval

New development would have to meet the 30% reduction goal by implementing planning considerations and best management practices, such as constructed wetlands. The nitrogen load from new developments may be partially offset by payment to the Wetlands Restoration Fund.

### 2. Public Education

Citizens can easily reduce the nitrogen pollution coming from their lawns and septic systems if they

understand the impacts of their actions and respond with appropriate management measures. The local governments and DWQ will develop public education materials for the Neuse basin.

### **3. Illegal Discharges**

Illegal discharges are substances deposited in storm sewers (which lead directly to streams) that really should be handled as wastewater discharges. Depending on the source, illegal discharges may contain nitrogen. Local governments must identify and remove illegal discharges.

### **4. Retrofit Locations**

There are a number of funding sources available for water quality projects, such as the Clean Water Management Trust Fund and the Wetland Restoration Program that the NC General Assembly has recently established. However, it is often difficult to locate appropriate project sites in urban areas. To assist technical experts, local governments will identify sites where water quality projects can fit into existing development.

These objectives encourage creative solutions for addressing the impacts of the basin's rapidly developing areas.