



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chittenden County municipalities rebrand stormwater awareness program; launch *Rethink Runoff*

Winooski, VT – Nine Chittenden County municipalities and three other entities are launching *Rethink Runoff*, a new multi-year public education and participation campaign focused on reducing the impacts of stormwater runoff. The campaign, with technical assistance from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), is a combined effort of the municipalities of Burlington, Colchester, Essex, Essex Junction, Milton, Shelburne, South Burlington, Williston and Winooski plus Burlington International Airport, the University of Vermont and the Vermont Agency of Transportation. For several years, these 12 partners have operated the successful but separate efforts of the Regional Stormwater Education Program and the Chittenden County Stream Team to engage the public.

Rethinkrunoff.org, the campaign's website, combines these efforts into a one-stop shop by providing data, educational resources, tutorials and engagement opportunities that teach residents about the effects of stormwater and the steps residents can take to help keep Lake Champlain clean. Highlights include an interactive map showing at-risk rivers and streams as well as animation that educates about projects around the house that can help mitigate stormwater runoff. The Stream Team will continue as the campaign's public involvement arm to manage stormwater-based volunteer opportunities throughout the spring and summer, as well as workshops, art projects, and clean-up efforts. All upcoming events and volunteer opportunities are listed on rethinkrunoff.org.

"We're very excited that Rethink Runoff will increase public awareness and action to the very important and timely issue of stormwater runoff. Rethinkrunoff.org will be a great resource for people to learn about the impacts of stormwater and what they can do to fight it and protect the water quality of Lake Champlain and our local streams," said Chelsea Mandigo of the Village of Essex Junction, co-chair of the CCRPC's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Subcommittee.

Highlighting issues about roof and driveway runoff, pet waste, fertilizer, and auto maintenance, the website illustrates how the day-to-day behaviors surrounding these issues can lead to pollution and algae blooms in Lake Champlain. In addition to general awareness, the Rethink Runoff website also shows examples of easy-to-do science projects that parents can do with their kids.

For more information, please contact Dan Albrecht, CCRPC Senior Planner, at dalbrecht@ccrpcvt.org or (802) 846-4490, Ext. *29.

The CCRPC provides planning and technical assistance in the areas of community development, transportation, agriculture, natural resources, housing, economic development, telecommunications and emergency management to the 19 municipalities of Chittenden County and to the public, while remaining consistent with federal and state requirements. The collaboration between the CCRPC, Chittenden County municipalities and other related resources agencies results in the development and implementation of plans that support sustainable development and improve the region's environment and quality of life. For more information about the CCRPC, please visit www.ccrpcvt.org.

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