



## **FROM LARRY THE H2O HERO**

### **WHAT IS A WATERSHED AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE?**

Simply said, a WATERSHED is a drainage basin or area of land where water from rain and melting snow or ice drains into a nearby waterbody such as a stream, pond, river, or lake. It includes both the streams and rivers that convey the water as well as the land surface from which the water drains. In a sense, it acts as a large funnel, collecting rainwater from an extensive surface area and concentrating it into one location.

We **MUST** care about watersheds because as water flows over land, it collects soil, pet wastes, fertilizers, pesticides, oils, and other pollutants which then flow to a nearby waterway. Even if your home is not near a stream or river, runoff from your yard will flow down your street into a ditch or storm drain, directly into a neighborhood pond or stream, and eventually reach Lake Ontario. This runoff can carry damaging and polluting chemicals with it.

Be an H2O Hero! When you make wise, environmentally friendly decisions, such as using less toxic lawn care products and proper disposal of potentially damaging chemical and electronic wastes, you can protect everyone's water quality! Better water quality means a cleaner Lake Ontario, safer drinking water and a safer environment for you and your family.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- The Genesee River Basin covers 2,700 square miles, and all the runoff from that watershed will pass through the 500 foot wide channel between the piers at Charlotte!
- A single quart of motor oil dumped down a storm drain can create a two acre oil-slick!

For more information about local stormwater pollution and what you can do to reduce it, visit [www.H2OHero.org](http://www.H2OHero.org) and become a fan of Larry the H2O Hero on Facebook!

*A message from The Stormwater Coalition of Monroe County and the Water Education Collaborative.  
Written by Linda Evans.*