



For Immediate Release  
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Contact: Mary-Hope Vass, Public Information Officer  
540.432.8931  
MaryHope.Vass@HarrisonburgVA.gov



## Clean Up Day Continues to Be a Success

Harrisonburg, VA – The City of Harrisonburg welcomed volunteers on Saturday to kick off the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Blacks Run Clean Up and Arbor Day.

In Harrisonburg, the second Saturday in April marks an important day of community service and an opportunity for residents to take care of their local environment.

Approximately 400 volunteers participated in Blacks Run Clean Up Day and collected more than 4,460 pounds of trash.

Statistics from previous clean up days:

Year	Number of Volunteers	Amount of Trash Collected (in pounds)
2013	450	4,600
2012	475	5,000
2011	600	6,120
2010	350	5,600
2009	375	6,000
2008	500	4,000
2007	480	3,720
2005	300	12,660
2003	160	4,760

\*Note: 2006 the event was rained out and there were no stats collected in 2004.

While this clean up day is significant in our community every spring, there are things residents can do from home on a daily basis to improve the overall health of our local streams.

Tips on reducing the amount of polluted stormwater that runs off your property from [www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org](http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org):

- Clean up your pet's waste to prevent bacteria from entering our waterways.
- Wash your vehicle on your lawn, instead of in your driveway, or use a commercial car wash. Car wash water contains a mixture of detergents, oils, heavy metals, and other pollutants that we wash off of our vehicles. If this wash water flows along the street, it can enter a storm drain and then flow to creeks and streams. This soapy, polluted water is untreated and can kill aquatic plants and animals.
- Dispose of automotive oil properly – not down a storm drain. City residents can put used oil into a leak-proof, labeled, non-breakable container with a screw-on lid and place the container next to the recycle bin. Automotive shops generally also allow residents to take used oil to their store for disposal.
- Keep grass clippings out of streams and off the street.
- Set mower height to three inches or higher so the taller grass slows the rate of runoff and will produce a deeper, denser root system. Dense roots will absorb more water, reducing lawn runoff, and preventing erosion.
- Disconnect your downspouts from the storm drain system and direct the water instead into yards and gardens. This reduces the rate of runoff going downstream, reducing flooding and stream erosion, and allows water to infiltrate into the ground and recharge our groundwater table.
- Use a rain barrel to help slow the rate of runoff from roofs. You can use this water later to water your lawn or garden.
- Never dump anything directly into storm drains. Storm drains go untreated directly into creeks, streams, and rivers.

For more information or to learn about other ways you can help local waterways in Harrisonburg and the Shenandoah Valley, visit [www.CleanStream.org](http://www.CleanStream.org).

*Who will notify you if an emergency-related event is happening in Harrisonburg or Rockingham County? Sign up to receive free alerts through the **Harrisonburg and Rockingham County Emergency Alert System** by visiting [www.HREmergencyAlert.com](http://www.HREmergencyAlert.com).*

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