



# NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2011 \* VOLUME 16, ISSUE 2

SWCD...established to promote the conservation and wise use of our county's natural resources

## Water Conservation at Home

Water is a necessity in our daily lives and yet is taken for granted just as often. Water does much more than simply quench our thirst; it works tirelessly for us in our home, workplace, and recreation. While there are many roles that water fills which we cannot replace, we can work to conserve water as it fulfills these roles to ensure clean, healthy water for generations to come.

We can save water used by toilets in several ways. Many toilets use more water than necessary to flush away our waste. By having less water used in the bowl and tank, the toilet will work just as well and can save half the water you use with each flush. If you can, purchase a toilet which uses a low volume of water. If you cannot afford such a replacement, fill a plastic bottle or two with water and place them in the tank of the toilet. Be sure not to put the bottles where the flushing mechanism could be affected or jammed. These plastic bottles will displace some of the water, allowing the tank to fill up with less water, meaning less water is used per flush. Most importantly, maintain your toilet and fix any leaks or problems as soon as they arise.

When in the shower, time yourself. Most of us don't need to stay in the shower for as long as we do in order to get clean.

Taking shorter showers and installing a low flow showerhead can reduce water waste while showering.

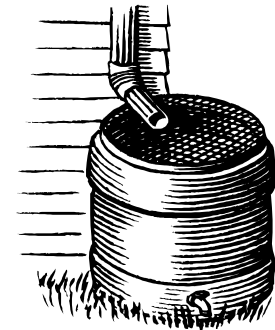


### Shorter showers... can reduce water waste.

When brushing teeth and shaving, one should turn off the water when it is not in use. You can prevent water from being needlessly poured down the drain.

Dishwashers use the same amount of water per run no matter how many dishes are in the dishwasher. Therefore, make sure your dishwasher is fully loaded to cut down on the number of dishwashing cycles you have to go through. If washing dishes by hand, fill one sink with wash water and another with rinse water. Don't let the water run while you wash your dishes.

Like with dishwashers, your laundry washing machine uses the same amount of water, regardless of how big your load is (unless you can change the water use settings by load size). Accumulate dirty laundry until you have a full load to increase efficiency.



### Purchase a rain barrel from SWCD for water conservation.

Water your lawn and garden only when they look like they need it early in the morning or later in the evening, when the temperature is cooler. When it looks like rain, don't water - let nature do it for you. Also, you can purchase a rain barrel from the District and use the water collected during rain events to water your garden and lawn.

Try out all of these water saving tips and call the District at 607-756-5991 for more ideas on how to conserve water and save money on your water bill.

### IN THIS ISSUE:

Water Conservation.....	1
Cortland & Chesapeake Bay...	2
Stream Rehab.....	2
Upcoming Events.....	3
Emerald Ash Borer.....	4
Pale Swallow Wort.....	4
Giant Hogweed.....	5
Past Events.....	6
Local Ag Promotion.....	7

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## Updates

### **Cortland's Water and the Chesapeake Bay**

At this time last year, environmental, agricultural and municipal groups in New York's Southern Tier were anxiously awaiting action by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish a pollution limit for water flowing from New York, traveling to the Chesapeake Bay. This Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) identifies the maximum amount of a pollutant a water body can receive and still meet water quality standards. Six states and the District of Columbia were given a load allocation or share of the TMDL for the Chesapeake Bay, which indicates the portion of the total load of pollutant that each state can contribute.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) developed a Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP), which identified measures or practices that reduce pollution to meet the TMDL. The EPA evaluated the WIP through its models to quantify the pollution reduction and the load once implemented. The NYSDEC worked with many groups, including Conservation Districts, to develop reasonable estimates of best management practices, particularly for nonpoint sources like agriculture and stormwater. Though New York's WIP did not meet the TMDL when evaluated in the model, the EPA accepted the WIP due to the very high confidence rating that New York's water quality improvement efforts were real and meaningful. If the plan had not been accepted, the EPA could have implemented measures of their own to help New York meet the TMDL. These measures, called backstops, include extremely costly wastewater treatment plan upgrades, additional stormwater regulations in communities, and increased regulation on farms.

However, New York has only a temporary reprieve in the TMDL process. Though EPA has accepted New York's plan, they will be reviewing progress. If New York is not able to show significant progress toward implementing the programs and practices listed in the WIP, the EPA can still implement backstop measures. This summer, the EPA revealed a new model, reallocating TMDL requirements. This model prompts even more

reductions from New York. The state seems poised to fight any reduction stipulations more stringent than the requirements in place when the original WIP was drafted. While the suggestions of the model may produce better local water quality, the implementation of these reductions may stifle any further development in the region and negatively impact our agricultural industry.

The District continues to work with landowners and communities to implement practices to reduce nonpoint source pollution. As we evaluate progress, the NYSDEC and the EPA have indicated that our communities need to step up efforts and accelerate progress to avoid backstops. To do so requires educating and reaching out to the community, planning, and documenting when practices are completed or installed. This will be difficult for the District as budgets get tighter. Little if any additional federal resources are being provided for local efforts. As a result, we all need to work together to identify opportunities and implement conservation where it makes sense and will be most efficient and cost effective. Voluntary conservation takes time, effort and money, but its success is always far more pleasant, productive and satisfying than regulations and enforcement.

For more information on the Chesapeake Bay TMDL and Cortland County's efforts, contact the District at 607-756-5991 or you can visit the EPA website to get a wide variety of information relating to the Chesapeake Bay TMDL at [www.epa.gov/chesapeakebaytmdl/](http://www.epa.gov/chesapeakebaytmdl/).

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### **Stream Rehabilitation**

After the large storm events over last few years, many Cortland County waterways have been altered. The District can assist landowners with technical information on stream rehabilitation, obtaining appropriate permits, providing a list of local contractors and materials suppliers, and construction oversight. Currently, the District does not have funding to help offset the costs of these projects to landowners, but our technical assistance is a free public service. If you would like us to help come up with ideas on how to stabilize your stream, feel free to contact us at 607-756-5991.

## Events

### **Pasture Walk:**

#### **Transitioning to Organic Dairy**

On August 18 from 11 am - 1:30 pm, there will be a pasture walk at the Reihlman Farm located at 6242 Rte. 11 in Homer. The focus will be on considerations for transitioning to an organic dairy farm. Grazing requirements will also be discussed during the walk. A light lunch is provided with a requested donation. This program is sponsored by Graze NY. To pre-register, please contact Sharon VanDeuson from Cornell Cooperative Extension at 607-753-5078 or shv7@cornell.edu.

### **2011 New York State Fair**

The NYS Conservation District Employees Association has a booth at the fair, providing assistance for those looking to conserve their natural resources. Visit us from 8/25-9/5 at the State Fairgrounds in Syracuse and learn more about the services your district may provide listed on page 7.

## **CORTLAND SWCD ANNUAL TREE AND SHRUB PROGRAM**



Once again the District had a very successful year by providing landowners with a wide variety of trees and shrubs for their properties. By planting trees and shrubs, we return to a more natural, less artificial environment. Birds and other wildlife are attracted to areas with more tree cover. The natural cycle of plant growth, reproduction, and decomposition are again present, both above and below the ground.

Thanks to all who ordered this year. Watch our website [cortlandswcd.org](http://cortlandswcd.org) in December for our 2012 order form and you too could contribute to a cleaner, greener tomorrow.

### **River Clean Up**

On September 24, 2011, the Soil and Water Conservation District will be holding the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Cortland County River Clean Up. Participants form groups to improve water quality in streams and lakes by spending a few hours removing trash and debris accumulating in those bodies of water. The registration deadline is September 9, 2011; so if you or someone you know is interested in forming or joining a team, please contact Mike Catalano at 607-756-5991. Please help to keep our precious water ways pristine.



**Participants of the River Clean Up Beautifying Cortland County's Waterways.**

## **Free Information Session on Cortland County's Water Resources**

Cortland County's sole source aquifer provides drinking water for a large percentage of Cortland's population. Our waterways, ponds and lakes are exceptional resources that benefit the public in numerous ways. Join us for a presentation on our local waters and a panel discussion with resource professionals.

*"Cortland County's Water Resources"*

*Wednesday, August 24, 2011*

*6:30-8:30PM.*

*NYS Grange Auditorium*

*100 Grange Place, Cortland*

Panelists will include Todd Miller of the USGS, Scott Cook of the NYSDEC, Dr. David Barclay of SUNY Cortland, and Patrick Reidy of Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District.

This event is free and open to the public. If you have any questions or need directions, call the District at 607-756-5991.

## **Invasive Species in New York**

### **Emerald Ash Borer**

*(Agrilus planipennis)*

“Don’t move firewood, it bugs me” has become the mantra of a growing awareness of the Emerald Ash Borer which has already killed over 40 million ash trees in the United States. First spotted in New York in 2009, the insect native to Asia has invaded most of Western New York, along with Green and Delaware counties in the Hudson River Valley. Adults measure about 1/2” long and 1/8” wide with emerald green wings and a copper-red to purple body. The larvae can grow up to 2.5 cm and range in color from creamy

white to light emerald green. The signs of infection (including D-shaped holes in the trunk of the tree, dead branches near the top of the tree, and the yellowing/browning of leaves) usually show only after a few years of infestation - by that time it is too late to save the tree.



**Adults measure about 1/2” long and 1/8” wide.**

Cut and stacked ash firewood can also hold the Emerald Ash Borer larvae for up to a year, making the movement of firewood a convenient conveyance for the insect as well. These insects could cause mass destruction similar to the chestnut blight, which nearly drove the American Chestnut to extinction.

If you suspect Emerald Ash Borer activity in your area, please call the State EAB hotline at 1-866-640-0652. You can also contact the Cortland County SWCD for further assistance and information at 607-756-5991.

### **Pale Swallow Wort**

*(Cynanchum rossicum)*

Pale Swallow Wort is a perennial, herbaceous vine native to Europe that has been reported as an invasive species in New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Wisconsin, and New York. The threat of this invasive species is its ability to outcompete native species, impacting the biodiversity of plant life in the area and forcing

out food for native animal species. The species has been documented to outcompete no-till corn and Christmas Tree farms in the area.

Pale Swallow Wort tends to grow in upland areas, in a wide range of light and moisture. Research indicates that Pale Swallow Wort grows well over limestone bedrock prone to seasonal droughts. Pale Swallow Wort is a self-pollinating plant, seeding in the summer months.

It is important to spot the species early and remove it by uprooting the plants and burning them. According to the National Park Service, Pale Swallow Wort has green-light brown oval shaped leaves, 3-4” long by 1/4” wide with pointed tips. The flower is

small, with five pedals in a star shape that look creamy pink to reddish brown. Some herbicides, when sprayed during the flowering



**The stem and leaves of a Pale Swallow Wort plant.**

and seeding times, are effective in controlling Pale Swallow Wort with multiple applications.

If you find Pale Swallow Wort in your area the Cortland County SWCD can provide assistance by getting in contact with the proper officials. Call 607-756-5991 for reporting and more details regarding Pale Swallow Wort.



**A Pale Swallow Wort plant flowering.**



## Giant Hogweed

(*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)

Giant Hogweed is a hazardous invasive species native to Europe and Asia. The danger of Giant Hogweed is its sap which, when combined with skin and sunlight, creates a public health hazard. The sap causes painful, burning blisters to form and burst after contact. Additionally, depending on where the sap comes in contact with an individual, eye irritation, permanent scarring, and blindness may also occur. As a result, the plant is placed as a federally listed noxious weed, making it illegal to grow, sell, or transport the plant.



**Giant Hogweed can grow over 12 feet tall.**

According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Giant Hogweed is a perennial plant which can grow up to twelve feet or more in height, with hollow, ridged stems, two to four inches in diameter. The stems may also

have dark red to purple blotches and coarse white hairs. The leaves are lobed, deeply incised, and can grow up to five feet across! Giant Hogweed flowers in June or July with clusters of numerous small white flowers forming a flat-topped umbel up to 2.5 feet across.



**Giant Hogweed leaf can be five feet in diameter.**

Giant Hogweed was first introduced to North America as an ornamental plant in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Since then, it has established itself as a severe public health risk and state and federal efforts have been made to remove the plant.



**Giant Hogweed flowering in clusters of small white flowers.**

If you identify Giant Hogweed in your area please contact the Cortland County SWCD at 607-756-5991 for further instructions.

There is also a Giant Hogweed Hotline at 1-800-292-3939.

All the Giant Hogweed pictures on this page were taken from the NYS DEC Giant Hogweed website. Cited: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html>



## Backyard Backpack

The SWCD has expanded the backyard backpack educational program with a backpack now available for each of the four seasons. The backyard backpack is meant to be a tool for children to learn more about the natural world around them from the comforts of their own backyard. Children, teachers, parents, and afterschool programs are encouraged to come into the Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District office and borrow the Backyard Backpack to use with children. The backpacks contain four educational sections with activities focusing on weather, animals, forestry/plants, and other aspects of our natural environment. Stop into the office or give us a call at 607-756-5991 for more information today.



## Past Events

### 2011 Cortland County Envirothon

On Friday, May 6th, 2011, local high school students competed in the Cortland County Envirothon which tested the students' knowledge in six subject areas: soils, forestry, aquatics, wildlife, current environmental issues, and problem solving. Seven teams participated from across the county. Team Cincy (Cincinnati) took first place this year and represented Cortland County at the New York State Envirothon on May 25th & 26th at Hobart and William Smith College, where they placed 17<sup>th</sup> out of 47 teams. The Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District is thankful to all of the participating teams, their chaperones and teachers, volunteers, exam writers, and proctors for this year's

event. A special thank you to our RSVP volunteers who guided the Envirothon teams from station to station. Another special thank you goes out to Coffee Mania for donating coffee which helped kick off the event in the morning!



**2011 Cortland County Envirothon Champs Team Cincy (Cincinnati) pose with their well-earned trophy. The members were: Molly Elwood, Ryan McGowen, Vern Rink, Jake Stone, and Richard Schmidt.**

### 2011 Cortland County Water Festival

The Cortland County Water Festival was held on Saturday, June 4, 2011 at the Cortland Water Works. Despite the overcast and rainy day, we had a great turnout with over three hundred people attending the festival enjoying the displays, events, and activities.

The Water Festival allows the community to learn the importance of our precious resource, water, and the sole source aquifer that quenches the thirst of much of Cortland County.

In the county wide municipal water taste test contest Virgil won a narrow victory over Homer.

This year's annual coloring and poetry contest precluding the Water Festival had hundreds of elementary and junior high school students enter to win a \$50 savings bond. Overall, five coloring and two poetry contest winners were chosen. A coloring contest was also held during the Water Festival for those school children who attended the event. Thank you to all who came to share in the Water Festival and made it a success.

#### Winners of the Day of Coloring Contest

**K-2<sup>nd</sup> Coloring:** Katelyn Lee  
Dryden Elementary School

**3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Coloring:** Michelle Brame  
Appleby Elementary School

#### Winners of the Mail-in Coloring and Poetry Contest

**Pre-K Coloring:** Bode Carter  
Appleby Elementary School

**K-2<sup>nd</sup> Coloring:** Arianna Howard  
Marathon Christian Academy

**3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Coloring:** Cady Walts  
Barry Elementary School

**3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Poetry:** Ben Andrews  
Smith Elementary School

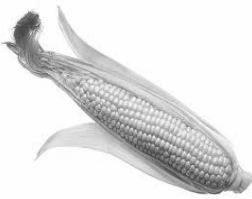
**6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Poetry:** Nisarga Paul  
Cortland Jr. Sr. High School



**Right: Children and adults learning about groundwater flow and pollution.**

## Electronic Copy of Newsletter Available

To conserve resources and cut costs, the District is asking subscribers if they would like to receive newsletters by email. Supplemental newsletters will be released on our website and not in print. If you would like to receive the electronic newsletter, please call the office at 607-756-5991 or email your address to [barbara.miner@cortlandswcd.org](mailto:barbara.miner@cortlandswcd.org).



## Local Agriculture Promotion Farmer Markets in Cortland County

### 1) Homer Farmers Market

*Location:* The Village Green on Main Street in Homer, NY.

*Dates and Times:* Open May 21-October 22, 2011. Every Saturday from 9AM-1PM. Every Wednesday from 4:30PM-7PM.

*Website:* <http://www.eastendfarmersmarket.com/>.

*Contact:* Tammie Whitson at [tammie@coldbrookfarm.com](mailto:tammie@coldbrookfarm.com).

### 2) Main Street Farmers Market

*Location:* Main Street in Cortland, NY.

*Dates and Times:* Open June 1-October 30, 2011. Every Saturday from 8AM-2PM. Every Tuesday from 8AM-2PM.

*Website:* <http://www.cortland.org/business/retail/r111.htm>.

*Contact:* Joan Franklin at 607-758-8373.

### 3) Virgil Farmers Market

*Location:* Virgil Elementary School, 1208 Church Street, Virgil, NY.

*Dates and Times:* Open June 11-October 15, 2011. Every Saturday from 9AM-12PM.

*Contact:* Chris Applegate at [ninibob@frontiernet.net](mailto:ninibob@frontiernet.net).

### 4) Cincinnatus Farmers Market

*Location:* The Rural Services Pavilion, 2704 Lower Cincinnatus Road, Cincinnatus, NY.

*Times and Dates:* Open March-December 2011. Every Saturday from 9AM-12PM.

*Contact:* Sister Kathleen Heffron at 607-863-3828.

Cortland County SWCD supports local farmers and farm products.

## SERVICES

*AGRICULTURAL LAND  
CONSERVATION*

*CONSERVATION  
EDUCATION*

*FISH STOCKING PROGRAM*

*HOMEOWNER ASSISTANCE*

*LIVING SNOW FENCE*

*SEEDLING PROGRAMS*

*SITE PLAN REVIEWS*

*SOIL GROUP WORKSHEETS*

*SOILS INFORMATION*

*STREAM DISTURBANCE  
PERMIT ASSISTANCE*

*STREAM STABILIZATION  
ASSISTANCE*

*URBAN CONSERVATION*

*WATER QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT*

*CONTACT OUR OFFICE FOR  
MORE INFORMATION.*

Cortland SWCD  
100 Grange Place, Rm. 202  
Cortland, N.Y. 13045  
Phone: (607)756-5991  
www.cortlandswcd.org

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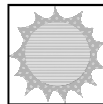
ALL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OF CORTLAND COUNTY SWCD AND USDA ARE OFFERED ON A NONDISCRIMINATORY BASIS WITHOUT REGARD TO RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, RELIGION, SEX, AGE, MARITAL STATUS, OR DISABILITY. CORTLAND COUNTY SWCD AND USDA ARE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDERS AND EMPLOYERS.

**Board of Directors:**

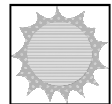
Tracey Evanick - Farm Bureau Member  
Ray Parker - Legislative Member  
Patrick Snyder - Member at Large  
John Steger - Legislative Member  
Eugene Wright - Grange Member, Chairman

**SWCD Staff:**

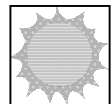
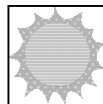
Amanda Barber - Manager  
Michael Catalano - Conservation Intern  
Barbara Miner - Senior Account Clerk  
Shawn Murphy - Conservation Assistant  
Jared Popoli - Conservation Assistant  
Pat Reidy - Water Quality Specialist  
Stacy Russell - Natural Resource Program Specialist  
Russell Smith - Natural Resource Conservationist



## Calendar



8/9/11	Board Meeting 3PM
8/18/11	Reihlman Pasture Walk
9/3/11	Board Meeting 3PM
8/25-9/5/11	New York State Fair
9/7/11	Office Closed (Labor Day)
9/9/11	River Clean-Up Registration Deadline
9/15-9/16/11	Conservation Field Days
9/24/11	River Clean Up
9/26-9/30/11	Conservation Skills Workshop (Staff Training)
10/10/11	Office Closed (Columbus Day)
10/11/11	Board Meeting 3PM



The Cortland County Soil & Water Conservation District is online. You can find us at [www.cortlandswcd.org](http://www.cortlandswcd.org). If you would be interested in receiving an electronic copy of the newsletter and other email notices please call (607) 756-5991 or send an email to Barb at [Barbara.Miner@cortlandswcd.org](mailto:Barbara.Miner@cortlandswcd.org).