

PRESS RELEASE, FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CHARLOTTE, MI – The Michigan Water Stewardship Program (MWSP) is a program of the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), Environmental Stewardship Division. The program originally launched in 2010 and is the sister program to the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP). The website has been completely updated and was recently re-launched. Eaton Conservation District manages this statewide program and facilitates watershed outreach across the state. Broadly speaking, this grant-funded program is made possible by the State of Michigan's Groundwater/Freshwater fund. MWSP is a network of organizations that provide educational assistance to Michigan's residents to identify and reduce contamination risks to water and other natural resources. The program encourages individuals to take voluntary proactive steps to protect Michigan's water quality – our drinking water – as well as protect our other valuable natural resources while caring for our family's health.

The updated website is user friendly and has resources for homeowners, students and educators. A new feature on the MWSP website is the Water Story. The Water Story has three characters or 'paths' that users can navigate. They can choose between Professor Dew, Droplette, and Trickle. Each character explores different aspects of the water cycle and will help students and adults make important connections to our water resources and why it's important we care for them. The new website will also feature a water game that will be released in the next few months. The game will have water droplet's falling from the sky and on their way down to the ground they will encounter pollution in the forms of oil, plastic and other trash. Users will gain points as they dodge the pollution.

Since the program's inception in 2010, we have reached over 200,000 people in the United States, Canada, Australia, Mexico, China and many other countries. The website also has over half a million-page views. The goal is to grow those numbers with the new website launch.

The Michigan Water Stewardship Program Coordinator is available to answer any questions about the new website and is also available for in-person or virtual watershed outreach for schools, libraries and other organizations.

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