

Enjoying Seafood

Fish and shellfish may contain mercury, PCBs, DDTs, Chlordane, Dioxins, or PFAS.

Check MDE's website for Fish Consumption and Shellfish Advisories before you enjoy your latest catch. Search "MDE Fish Consumption Advisory".

For more information on PFAS and the dangers these chemicals pose, visit <http://smrwa.org/PFAS.html>

Here are some general rules of thumb for eating seafood:

- Limit your seafood consumption to a few meals a month.
- Never eat the "mustard" of blue crabs.
- Wait at least three days after heavy rains to eat raw oysters. Never eat raw oysters harvested from within 50 feet of the shoreline.
- Cook, clean, and store fish and shellfish properly. Chill immediately after catching.
- Children, pregnant people, and the elderly are at the highest risk for contamination related illnesses.



www.smrwa.org

Protecting, promoting, and
improving the health of the St.
Mary's River and its watershed.



**A Waterfront
Homeowner's Guide
to River Stewardship**

Stewardship

“Think global, act local”

Living on or close to our beloved waterways is an amazing privilege, but it comes with responsibility.

Waterfront properties are the frontlines of our efforts to prevent pollutants such as sediment, excess nutrients, and harmful chemicals from entering our waterways.

If your property is within 1,000 feet of Maryland’s tidal waters and wetlands, it is in the Critical Area.

Please refer to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources’ Critical Area Commission or the St. Mary’s County Government before beginning any residential projects in the Critical Area including tree, vine, and shrub removal.

Grow oysters off your dock. Oysters filter the water and support other species. Maryland provides an income tax credit to offset the cost of growing gear. Contact your local oyster farmer to learn more.

“Be wise, don’t over fertilize”

Better yet, don’t fertilize lawns at all!

Fertilizer harms our river. Never fertilize within 20 feet of the high tide line. Use only the amount needed and apply to lawns only in the early fall. Compost lawn clippings.

Stormwater runoff can add excess nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment into our Bay.

These pollutants lead to algal blooms which can cause dead zones, fish kills, and increased harmful bacteria.

Redirect stormwater to a rain garden or into a wooded area. Install a rain barrel to slow down the runoff.

Bring your household hazardous waste to the County’s Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day.

To stop shoreline erosion, consider installing a “living shoreline” to reduce erosion and provide habitat for native plants and animals.

Keep an eye on your septic tank’s drain field for foul smells and accumulating water—install a BMP system. (Grants available)

“Scoop it, bag it, trash it”

Pet waste left in your yard will find its way into our waterways. Pick up pet waste daily and dispose of in a landfill. Cat box waste should also go into landfill or flushed down the toilet. In urban and suburban areas, pet waste is the predominant source of E.coli pollution. Never use a backyard composter—they pollute.

“Chlorine kills everything”

The safest cleaners for your boats and gear are baking soda, vinegar, lemon juice, and borax. For tough stains use commercial cleaners specifically made to be friendly in the marine environment. Never use chlorine bleach or products containing chlorine.

“Get involved locally”

Report polluters and poachers. Text anonymously or call 443-433-4112.

Support your local environmental group. www.SMRWA.org

