

## **Block Leader Program**

### **What is a Block Leader Program?**

Block leader programs can be used to meet many goals within a community, including stormwater education. Block leaders are citizens who volunteer to distribute information about issues affecting their neighborhood. The information helps residents make informed choices about stormwater. Block leaders are not involved in soliciting anything from their neighbors, nor do they monitor activities. They simply are grassroots communicators who distribute information and materials, and serve as resources for their neighbors. Block leader programs can also take on water conservation and recycling among other issues. Block leader programs could be an offshoot of neighborhood watch programs.

### **What do Block leaders do?**

Block Leaders are a network of residents dedicated to environmental education, stormwater management, recycling, or whatever you design the program around.

Individual block leaders may exist for any size neighborhood. Block leaders should be involved in choosing the size of their “block” which can include just the homes on their street, homes on neighboring streets, or homes within their subdivision. They may also work with other block leaders within the same watershed to share ideas and resources. Block leaders can provide a source of stakeholder input for the watershed, and can distribute the information from stakeholder meetings and watershed groups to their constituents.

Block leaders are not necessarily your town’s educators, but a specific neighborhood’s means of obtaining written educational information from their municipality. For example, block leaders may deliver packets of information about stormwater, or help you with delivering surveys to specific neighborhoods.

### **Provide Resources for Block Leaders**

Block leaders need an organized informed contact at the municipality with whom to work. Block leaders are your helpers. You should offer orientation/workshop sessions for block leaders on a regular basis. These workshops tell them what the municipality has available for the community. In addition workshops could serve to educate the block leaders on stormwater topics, so they feel more comfortable handing out the information and handling the occasional question that is within their means to answer. It is your responsibility to supply them with useful, organized informative pamphlets and material to pass out to their neighbors, along with contact information to give the neighbors, should they have more questions.

### **Provide Incentives to Block leaders?**

Block Leaders should be offered incentives for volunteering their time. If your town offers workshops on landscaping, irrigation, stormwater, or composting, block leaders could be offered first choice of attendance, or if there is a charge, they could be given free tickets. The municipality could send the block leaders to similar classes offered by area businesses or parks. You could offer leadership workshops to foster more involvement from these individuals, by training them to become better leaders.