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Clean Water

Excess nutrients, sediment, and toxic contaminants degrade our waterways, harm fish and wildlife, and pose risks to human health. Reducing these pollutants is critical to creating safe, healthy waters for animals and people.

Doing Our Part in the Watershed

As the second largest federal land holder in the Chesapeake Bay, the Department of Defense (DoD) contributes to meeting the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership's water quality goals through compliance with the Clean Water Act and other applicable regulations, and by implementing water quality Best Management Practices (BMPs) on installations that help reduce nutrient and sediment runoff into the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.



Leading by Example

In 2010, EPA established the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), sometimes called the Bay's "pollution diet," which limits the discharge of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment into the region's streams, creeks, and rivers. DoD works closely with EPA and state jurisdictions to assure that pollutant reductions achieved through BMPs at installations are accounted for under the TMDL.

DoD installations incorporate low impact development practices into new construction projects when feasible and strengthen stormwater management by implementing urban retrofit practices and non-structural control measures that reduce volume and improve the quality of stormwater runoff.

Many DoD installations have upgraded wastewater treatment plants with enhanced nutrient removal technologies, restored shorelines to prevent erosion, and converted oil heating boilers to natural gas to reduce air deposition of nitrogen oxides. DoD also continues to identify the most effective ways to reduce nutrients and sediment entering the Bay.



Rain gardens and bioretention areas, such as those installed in Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, are examples of how DoD installations manage stormwater.