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Why is Water Quality Education Program a critical issue in the District of...

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Abstract Text:

Washington, DC is served by a Public Water System that uses surface water. The Potomac River is the source of drinking water for the nation's capital. It is provided by Washington Aqueduct Division of the U.S Army Corps of Engineers. DC WASA distributes and sells it to its customers in the District of Columbia. To make sure that the public is provided with safe drinking water, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) in drinking water. However, during the calendar years 2004 through 2007, drinking water contamination in Washington, DC was detected.

Washington, DC uses combined sewer systems to convey both sanitary sewage and storm water to Waste Water Treatment Stations. The system was built before 1900. When heavy rain occurs, some of the combined sewer systems are ruptured and release pollutions to the environment. Moreover, lack of awareness of water quality protection accelerates Non-Point Source Pollution. As Washington, DC's population increases, demand for water increases. Pollution produced by individual homes and construction activities also increases pollutant input. In addition, old houses and buildings with lead paint still exist in the metropolitan D.C. area. Arsenic from chemical weapons testing during World War I is still present in surrounding soils.

Impact Statement:

Water Quality Education Program is vital for enhancing water quality awareness and eliminating Non-Point Source Pollution, which helps create environmental stewardship in the District of Columbia. As a result, in six different elementary schools more than 1,000 youth were introduced to water quality education. More than 5,000 fact sheets on water education were distributed. In each Ward, water quality education was provided to approximately 180 adults. In three DC Public Schools, rain garden projects have been implemented.