



## DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

August 2nd, 2024

Dear Residents,

The Town would like to remind you about the importance of maintaining healthy waterways in our community. Stormwater runoff is one of the main contributors to pollution in our waterways. Stormwater runoff is the water coming from rain events that runs over yards, parking lots, and roads, eventually making its way into the storm drain systems. What most people do not realize is that stormwater entering the storm drain systems are not treated before entering our waterways. This means that pollutants such as litter, animal waste, bacteria, oil, chemicals, pesticides, and fertilizers are eventually released into our waterways that we love to swim, boat, and fish in.

All the pollutants listed above are a concern, as we want to limit their concentrations in our waterways to keep our ecosystems healthy. Our focus with this informational mailout is **how to reduce harmful bacteria entering our waterways through stormwater discharges**.

Currently, Mount Pleasant has two waterways with excessive presence of fecal bacteria: Shem Creek and the Wando River and its tributaries. These waterways are listed as “impaired” and are regulated by TMDLs issued by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (formerly SCDHEC). A TMDL is the calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant allowed to enter a waterbody and the subsequent plan to restore water quality. Shem Creek and the Wando River have surpassed the TMDL threshold for the bacterial pollutant, and the Town is committed to reducing these levels. The Town continues to monitor the bacteria in these impaired waterways and report them to SCDES. Data from our monitoring has shown that bird and dog waste bacteria are the greatest contributors to these bacteria levels.

The Town is actively trying to reduce bacteria sources through removal of septic tanks, providing dog waste stations, and educating our residents about how they can help the effort. Please refer to the attached flyers and handouts for more information on actions residents and HOAs can take in reducing dog and bird waste. Please distribute these materials within your communities and help keep the Town clean and safe. If you would like PDF versions of these materials, please reach out to the contact below.

For questions or more information, please contact the Engineering & Environmental Division at the Town of Mount Pleasant at (843) 856 3080 or by email at [waterquality@tompsc.com](mailto:waterquality@tompsc.com).

Thank you for doing your part to keep the Town’s waterways healthy!

Sincerely,

John Farrell  
Environmental TMDL Manager

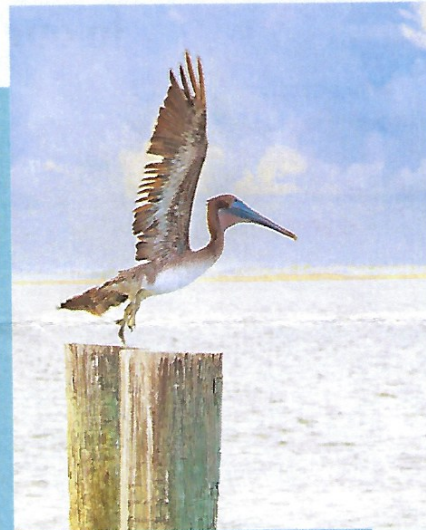


# TMDLs in Your Town

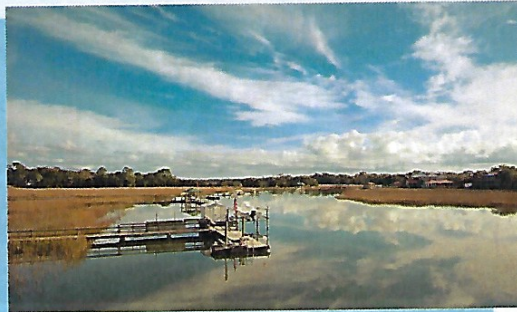
## What is a TMDL?

The Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is the calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant allowed to enter a waterbody each day and still meet the State's water quality standards.

Waterways that exceed this calculation are listed as "impaired" by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The TMDL also refers to the plan created to clean these impaired waterways.



## Which Mt. Pleasant Waterways are Impaired?



Shem Creek

Mount Pleasant has two waterways with TMDLs, Shem Creek and the Wando River.

In Shem Creek, *Enterococci* bacteria levels exceed water quality standards. *Enterococci* can indicate the presence of fecal material and disease-causing bacteria.



Wando River

In the Wando River and its tributaries, Fecal Coliform levels exceed water quality standards. Like *Enterococci*, Fecal Coliform can indicate that disease causing bacteria are present. The Wando River is a Shellfish Harvesting Area and has strict restrictions on bacteria levels. This is why you may see a Shellfish Bed Area is closed on DHEC's website.

### For more information:

**EPA:** <https://www.epa.gov/national-aquatic-resource-surveys/indicators-enterococci>

**DHEC:** [https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/shellfish/maps/SFMA\\_09B.pdf](https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/shellfish/maps/SFMA_09B.pdf)

# How can you help?

**Dog waste and bird waste are the main sources of bacteria in our TMDL waterways.**



## Scoop the Poop!

Always pick up after your pet! When it rains, uncollected dog waste is carried into our storm drains and waterways.

Dog waste contains harmful bacteria that pollutes our waters. Always bag your dog waste and dispose of it in a trash can. Check and clean your yard, pet waste is not fertilizer!

## Don't Feed the Birds!

Feeding birds encourages them to flock in higher concentrations than they would with natural food sources. More birds = more poop!

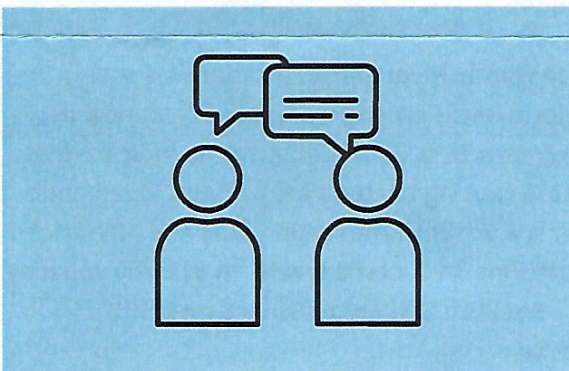
Bird waste can contaminate our waterways with harmful bacteria, so it is important to prevent more birds from feeding in the area. Observe, but don't serve the birds!



## Spread the Word!

Thanks for reading this fact sheet! Now you know a bit more about the TMDLs in our Town and how to reduce water pollution.

Help us spread the word and remind your community of the importance of picking up pet waste and not feeding birds!



### Resources

**EPA:** <https://www.epa.gov/tmdl/overview-total-maximum-daily-loads-tmdls>

**DHEC:** <https://scdhec.gov/bow/south-carolina-303d-list-impaired-waters-tmdls>