

## Regional Water Pollution Reporting Hotline Promotion

### Kitsap County

G1200465

February 22, 2012 – June 30, 2013

Final Total Project Cost: \$101,611.51

Final Ecology Grant Contribution: \$101,611.51

# Spills happen. Help us find them.



**CALL or CLICK** if you see  
**oil, paint, suds, or sewage** in  
**ditches, drains or waterways.**

Call **Kitsap 1** at **360-337-5777**  
Click **[pollution.kitsapgov.com](http://pollution.kitsapgov.com)**

If it looks hazardous, call 911



### Spills Happen Template Advertisement

#### Project Description

The NPDES Phase I and II municipal stormwater permits require jurisdictions to publicize a local telephone number for public reporting of spills and other illicit discharges. The overall goal of the Regional Water Pollution Reporting Hotline Promotion project was to develop a strategy for promoting reporting hotlines based on background research, focus groups, and a pilot campaign. While the main intent of the project was to encourage residents to call Kitsap 1 to report water pollution, the project team also wanted to educate residents about spills and discharges and the effect of polluted stormwater on water bodies. The project team took a social marketing approach in developing a strategy for promoting Kitsap 1.

#### Project Accomplishments

During the Spills Happen Pilot Campaign, a variety of advertising mediums were used. These included:

- A full page ad in the annual county-wide Waste Wise Communities Newsletter;
- A large format direct mail postcard to nearly 40,000 homes,
- Wall graphics on 4 ferry routes;
- A Port Angeles bus ad;
- Messages in utility bills;
- Storm drain markers with the hotline number printed on them;
- Newspaper and magazine print ads;
- Online advertising through the Kitsap Sun, Facebook, and Yahoo;
- Dump Smart brochures with the hotline information; and
- Portable banner displays

The cumulative effect of these efforts was nearly 7 million impressions during the pilot campaign at a cost of \$0.007 each.

## Water Quality Improvements and Lessons Learned

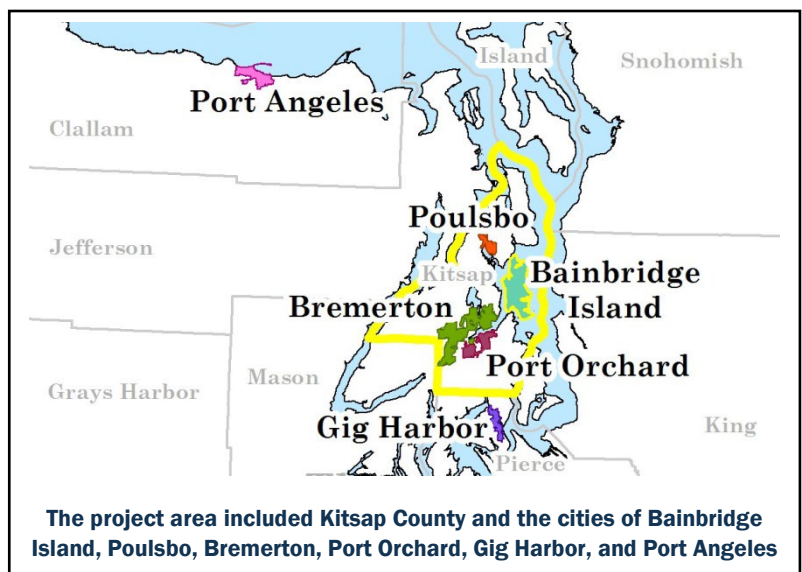
The water quality impacts from illicit discharges can be minimized by timely reporting of spills by the public, followed by quick response by the jurisdiction responsible for the MS4. This project helped elucidate effective strategies to encourage the public to identify and report illicit discharges. Through this work, we learned:

- Using a template graphic and tagline contributes to an effective branding of the campaign. We found in the focus groups that photos of pollution were not effective in depicting the pollutant or setting. The decision to use a bold illustration rather than photos resulted in a clearer depiction of the message we wanted to convey – call Kitsap 1 if you see spills of oil, suds, paint or sewage.
- The project uncovered that the existing photos of pollution examples were not sufficiently clear or of high quality to use in a promotional campaign. In the future, we will let field staff know that we are interested in high quality photos of spills, e.g. no shadows, sharp image, proper context. These photos, labeled with the pollutant, can be used on the website to educate the public about which types of spills to report.
- We learned that it's best to target a few water quality issues rather than try to cover all the pollutants. This approach lends itself to effectively communicating messages about simple behaviors that residents can adopt to make a difference for water quality.
- Evaluation of the baseline water quality complaint data showed that 38% of reports were made by county and city staff. Many agency staff work in the field where they may encounter spills. It was deemed important to regularly train staff to call Kitsap 1 and offer a prompt to remind them of who to call.

## Next Steps for Continued Success

- Continue to tabulate water quality complaints using the template developed for this project. Measure the effects of the pilot campaign promotions by comparing the baseline data to July 2013 – June 2014 data.
- Hotline staff should continue to ask and record how people heard about the reporting hotline.
- Future phone surveys should ask about awareness of Kitsap 1 and what types of water quality issues they would be most likely to report. Also, ask where stormwater goes and see if we have been successful in getting an increase over the 50% of residents who have the correct information.
- Pursue the option of adopting 311 as the County hotline number and a downloadable app for smartphones to make it easier for residents to report spills and other water quality issues.
- Develop a template graphic that shows the freshwater environment that can be used by jurisdictions that are not on Puget Sound. Include a recreational component, e.g. kayak or standup paddle boarder.
- Consider purchasing travel coffee mugs with the Spills Happen logo for the agency field staff, and posters for their break rooms and municipal maintenance shops.

### Port Angeles Bus Ad



The project area included Kitsap County and the cities of Bainbridge Island, Poulsbo, Bremerton, Port Orchard, Gig Harbor, and Port Angeles

### Recipient Contact Information

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