



A Local Government Guide to the Chesapeake Bay

HOW YOUR WATERSHED WORKS

A Local Government Guide to the Chesapeake Bay is a [seven-module series](#) created to support decision making by local officials. As a local leader, your decisions set the course for your community. Your actions determine the health and vitality of your jurisdiction, as well as that of local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. You can achieve win-win outcomes by prioritizing local economic development, infrastructure resiliency, public health, and education while also protecting your environment. This fact sheet accompanies an overview module about the Chesapeake Bay.

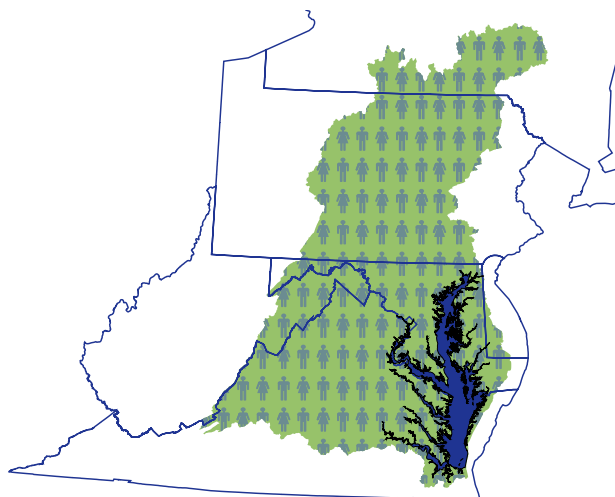
GETTING TO KNOW THE CHESAPEAKE BAY

64,000 mi²

watershed — that's **14 times** larger than the area of water it drains into, meaning a lot of on-land pollution washing into a little bit of water

7

jurisdictions
(six states and DC)



18+ million

people live in the watershed

11,656 miles

of shoreline. This mileage is equivalent to four cross-country trips between Annapolis, MD and Los Angeles, CA

CLEAN WATER = THRIVING COMMUNITIES



Clean water supports vital fisheries, raises home values, and supports tourism, agriculture, and local businesses.



In the watershed states

\$4.2 billion | **47,000**
spent while fishing | jobs supported

Data from the American Sportfishing Association

Clean water increases property value

Fine dining	✓
Recreational opportunities	✓
Local breweries	✓
Parks and open spaces	✓
Attracts businesses	✓
Property value	\$\$\$



Good water quality means clean drinking water, consumable fish and shellfish, and safe recreation on, in, and near local waterways. In a 2019 poll, **80%** of participants were personally worried about pollution of rivers, lakes and reservoirs and **79%** were concerned by polluted drinking water.

Data from GALLUP



Green infrastructure, or systems that harness natural processes and technology inspired by nature, can save money over traditional systems.



Education is ~40% of local budgets. Get more out of your investment by raising environmental stewards & incorporating hands-on, visible schoolyard projects with environmental benefits.



PROTECT YOUR COMMUNITY

WHAT YOU CAN DO



Reduce impervious surfaces in your jurisdiction to reduce pollutants entering your local waterways.



Invest in environmental education and projects within your school systems to provide dividends in citizen stewardship, community health, and clean water protections.



Lead your community to achieve environmental and local government goals by exploring technical and funding resources.



Share this information with others to create an even stronger, more resilient community.

A FEW RESOURCES [-Visit the Delaware Department of Natural Resources website for more information.](#)

Beyond this module, here are a few other resources you may find useful.

US EPA's How's My Waterway

<https://mywaterway.epa.gov/>

Look up the condition of and threats to your local waterways.

Video Series: Chesapeake Bay Program's Bay 101

<https://bit.ly/CBPPay101>

Learn more about a variety of topics in bite-sized video clips.

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's RiverWise Communities Manual

<https://bit.ly/RiverWise>

Motivate people to adopt and maintain environmentally friendly practices on their own properties and in the community.

Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative

<https://www.chesapeakemonitoringcoop.org>

Play a hands-on role in the monitoring of your local waters and encourage others to get involved.

NOAA's Chesapeake Bay Ecosystem Atlas

<https://bit.ly/ChesBayAtlas>

For teachers: <https://bit.ly/ChesBayAtlasTE>

Learn about the history and current dynamics of the system with this free, interactive iBook.

Stroud Water Research Center's Model My Watershed

<https://bit.ly/ModelMyWatershed>

Learn how different conservation or development scenarios could modify your local runoff and water quality with an interactive modeling tool.

[Go to "How Your Watershed Works" Module](#)