



The Knox County Storm Drain Style-Off 2018

Call for Artists!

Overview

The Knox County Stormwater Strong Streams Program is proud to bring back the *Storm Drain Style-Off* in 2018. This unique and engaging educational event uses art to communicate the function and importance of our local storm drains as a conduit for rainwater to streams and rivers. Last year was the inaugural year of the *Storm Drain Style-Off* in Knox County, and was a highly publicized and attention-grabbing event that allowed us to spread the word about the fact that storm drains lead directly to creeks and rivers.

The Knox County Public Library, Graning Paint Company, and local artists are teaming up with Knox County Stormwater this year for the second annual Knox County *Storm Drain Style-Off*. This exciting project gives artists the opportunity to express themselves with semi-permanent public art in the form of small-scale outdoor murals. This project, along with the involvement of our vibrant art community, is unique and has a positive impact on water quality protection. If you are an artist and interested in showcasing your talent for the *Storm Drain Style-Off*, read on!

Why Storm Drains?

In Knox County, as in most communities across the country, storm drains channel runoff to our rivers, lakes and ponds. An ongoing and hazardous misconception is that the storm drains are “sewers” that lead to the wastewater treatment plant. With this misconception, the storm drains are misused as a ‘safe’ way to dispose of waste such as soapy water, oil, paint, trash, and other pollutants. When pollutants are disposed of into storm drains, they end up in our waterways. The *Storm Drain Style-Off* is designed as a public education project to inform the community of the connection the storm drains have with our waterways.

Water is like a magnet and picks up everything in its path such as litter, grease, oil, brake dust, anti-freeze, fertilizer, and pet waste. When it rains, stormwater flows over parking lots, streets, lawns and other surfaces. The water collects pollutants, which enter the storm drains and flows into our local streams and rivers, the source of our drinking water supply in Knox County.

To reduce pollution individuals can: keep trash and other items from entering the storm drains, direct downspouts away from driveways and streets (preferably to a rain garden, rain barrel or a grass swale), keep lawn clippings & leaves out of the streets, avoid washing vehicles on a pavement or concrete driveway, pick up pet waste, dispose of chemicals properly, get a soil test before fertilizing your lawn, and plant vegetation or use barriers to prevent bare dirt from washing away. Good practices include the use of pervious pavement, green roofs, rain gardens, rain barrels and cisterns, native landscaping, tree preservation and planting, and protection of natural areas for greenspace. These practices also reduce other negative impacts of excess runoff such as streambank erosion and fish/aquatic life habitat degradation, as well as promoting groundwater recharge to feed our springs, streams, and drinking water. For more information about stormwater pollution and these practices, visit www.knoxcounty.org/stormwater.

What are we looking for?

We have designated 10 storm drains to be painted for this year's project: 3 at the Cedar Bluff Library branch (9045 Cross Park Drive), 2 at the Fountain City branch (5300 Stanton Rd.), 1 at the Halls branch (4518 E. Emory Rd.), 3 at the Howard Pinkston branch (7732 Martin Mill Pike), and 1 at the North Knoxville branch (2901 Ocoee Trail). They may not start out as the most attractive drains but by the time they are painted they will be! Keep in mind we are focusing on the health of our rivers and streams and the goal of this initiative is to reduce littering and improve water quality.

You are welcome to include some of the practices that could contribute to polluting the rivers such as trash, cigarette butts and pet waste but submissions are not limited to these ideas. Feel free to use words in your design to help in communicating the idea. Please keep in mind that communicating the message is critical. Also please keep in mind when considering design elements that copyright rules prevent the reproduction of storybook characters without permission.

Depending on the storm drain, artwork can expand up to four feet (but no further) on any one side of the storm drain where the conditions allow. Some designs will have to be modified based on the storm drain you are assigned to. The artwork is anticipated to last for at least 2 years. We hope the murals will continue to raise awareness long after the initial planned events.

Artist Selection Process

We are asking artists to submit a sketch of their idea with the attached application. The sketch should be fleshed out enough to where the committee can get an idea of the artwork – a full mock-up is not recommended as the art will likely have to adjust to the individual storm drain that you will be assigned. A committee of Knox County Stormwater staff, Knox County Public Library staff, and Graning Paint staff will choose 10 designs from those submitted. Artists will be notified after June 1, 2018.

After 10 artists are selected, they will have a two-day window to view the 10 storm drains that are to be painted at the multiple library branches. After this period is up, artists will notify the selection committee of their top 3 storm drain choices. Storm drains will be assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis after the selection time is up.

What to Expect?

- The artist will be responsible for picking up traffic paint at the Graning Paint Company store at 600 E. Magnolia Ave. on a pre-determined date shared with the artist upon selection.
- The traffic paint comes in 5 colors that you will mix to create your own palette (Red, Yellow, Blue, White and Black)
- Artists are required to use **only the paint** provided by Graning Paint Company for safety and longevity purposes.
- Paint is to be applied only with brushes. Use of airbrushes, spray paint, paint sprayers and / or aerosol cans is prohibited and will result in disqualification.
- The storm drains will be scrubbed with a wire bristle brush before the project begins.
- A *Storm Drain Style-Off* committee member will meet the artist at their assigned storm drain on the day of painting to review painting specifications. They will also drop off orange traffic cones and a safety vest which they will be **required** to use during painting.

- On the application you will see deadlines for a brief biography and personal photo submittal and art completion. These deadlines are critical to the success of the project. Once the storm drain murals are completed, professional photos of each drain will be taken and printed by Knox County.
- Paintings must be completed on or before Sunday, August 19th, 2018.

Photos of the completed artwork, along with the artist's printed picture and bio, will be displayed at a First Friday event at the Emporium in downtown Knoxville on September 7, 2018. The public will be encouraged to vote for a "People's Choice" winner by visiting our website (www.knoxcounty.org/stormwater). **The winner of the people's choice award will receive a \$150 Visa gift card and prizes from local businesses. Second place entry will receive a \$100 Visa gift card, and the third place entry will receive a \$50 Visa gift card, as well as prizes from local businesses.**

A Few Examples....

- Last year's designs from the 2017 Storm Drain Style-Off here in Knox County:
https://knoxcounty.org/stormwater/pdfs/strong_streams/SDSO_Artist_Bios.pdf
- The James River Basin Partnership ran a similar program from 2010-2014:
<https://www.jamesriverbasin.com/storm/>
- The Richmond, VA City Department of Public Utilities conducted its first storm drain art program in 2016: <http://www.rvah2o.org/storm-drain-art/>
- Blue Water Baltimore has an ongoing stenciling and muraling program in Baltimore, MD.
<https://www.bluewaterbaltimore.org/about/programs/storm-drain-art/>

This [link](#) will lead you to other pictures of painted storm drains from both our area and other areas of the country.

Application information

If you are an artist interested in participating and lending your time and talent, please print the Artist Application, fill out and send along with your design idea to:

Knox County Stormwater
Amy Mann
205 W. Baxter Ave.
Knoxville, TN 37917
Phone: (865) 215-5283

You may scan and email your application to Stormwater@knoxcounty.org

We would appreciate seeing other paintings you have done as well.

Deadline to receive application is May 1, 2018

Let the message and your artistic imagination run with this project. We are excited to see what ideas are out there!

Questions or concerns? Please email stormwater@knoxcounty.org or call Amy at (865) 215-5283

