

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RESTAURATEURS GIVE WATER A HAND

Clean Water Initiative Helps Local Food Service Protect Water Supply

OREGON, Ohio, June 8, 2006 – Food service establishments interested in reaching out to environmentally conscious consumers while saving time and money are signing-on to *Give Water a Hand*, a year-long clean water initiative sponsored by the Maumee RAP (Remedial Action Plan) and Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG).

The *Give Water a Hand* business campaign is designed to educate businesses on how they impact waterways, and how to save money, time, and resources while protecting our area’s rivers and streams. Through use of a FREE guidebook with tips pertaining specifically to food service establishments, completion of the self-assessment form and a complimentary site visit by a local *Give Water a Hand* partner, businesses are encouraged to implement money saving and water protection practices. In the food service sector, the program’s tips and guidelines are especially important, because clean water is vital to a healthy food chain.

Sonny Berry, owner of Oregon’s Bayshore Supper Club, is one restaurateur who sees the value in protecting area waterways. The supper club is located on Maumee Bay and its menu has a large selection of fish and seafood, so Berry says he and his staff are vigilant about the clean water practices recommended in the *Give Water a Hand* materials, including proper disposal of waste water.

“Everything goes into the sanitary sewers, so none of the harmful stuff goes into the storm sewers,” he said. “We don’t want any contamination going into the lake.”

(more)

Give Water a Hand is a cooperative education effort among the following:

Maumee RAP (419-241-9155)
Toledo Metropolitan Area Council
of Governments (419-241-9155)
Lucas County (419-213-4500)
City of Northwood (419-693-9327)
City of Oregon (419-698-7047)

Village of Haskins (419-823-1911)
Village of Holland (419-865-7104)
Village of Millbury (419-836-9671)
Village of Ottawa Hills (419-536-1111)
Village of Waterville (419-878-8100)
Village of Whitehouse (419-877-5383)

Township of Jerusalem (419-836-8921)
Township of Monclova (419-865-7862)
Township of Spencer (419-865-2883)
Township of Springfield (419-865-0239)
Township of Sylvania (419-882-0031)
Township of Washington (419-726-6621)

Township of Waterville (419-878-5176)
Ohio Environmental Education Fund
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Other tips are as simple as keeping dumpsters closed so rainwater won't become contaminated before flowing into rivers and streams, and using a broom instead of a hose to clean parking lots and paved areas.

In addition to helping keep waterways healthy, restaurants benefit from the promotional material provided by *Give Water a Hand*, including a window cling that promotes the location's participation – an important signal to environmentally conscious customers who want to support businesses sensitive to the environment.

The *Give Water a Hand: You Can Make a Difference* campaign is a cooperative educational effort focused on educating residents and business owners of Northwest Ohio about storm water and other water quality issues. The average citizen and business owner does impact water quality and can make a positive difference. The Maumee RAP (Remedial Action Plan) and Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG) are partnering with local cities, villages, and townships to educate the region about improving water quality and managing water quantity. The following jurisdictions are participating in the program: Lucas County, Cities of Toledo, Northwood and Oregon; Villages of Haskins, Holland, Millbury, Waterville; Townships of Monclova, Springfield, Sylvania and Washington.

Food service businesses located in participating areas are eligible to become a *Give Water a Hand* partner. For more information on the *Give Water a Hand* program, please call 419-241-9155 or visit us at www.MaumeeRAP.org.

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