

2026 Storm Drain Art Contest

Did you know that anything in our environment can end up in the rivers, lakes, and streams of Forsyth County? **No?** You are not alone.

As water flows over land, streets and parking lots after a rain event, numerous contaminants including trash, chemicals, pet waste, motor oil, yard clippings, sediment, and fertilizers are collected along the way. Any of these contaminants entering storm drains ultimately end up in rivers, lakes, and streams, impacting water quality and sensitive aquatic ecosystems.

What can we do about this problem? Educate – spread the word to stop litter and other pollutants from ending up in our waterways.

The 2026 Storm Drain Art Contest seeks to use art to educate the public about watershed health. The winners will have the opportunity to paint their creations on designated storm drains throughout the city and county.

Rules and Restrictions:

Who can enter the 2026 Storm Drain Art Contest?

- Artwork may be submitted by currently enrolled Forsyth County High School students, Middle School Students, or Homeschool students of high school or middle school age.

Do artists receive monetary compensation?

- The three winning artists will receive \$100 in compensation for their artwork. Artist payment will occur after the completion of the work.
- All participating artists will receive certificates of recognition.

Deadline for submissions

- All entries must be received by 5pm EST on Friday, March 06, 2026.

Judging: What will the review panel be looking for?

- All entries submitted into the Storm Drain Art Contest will first be reviewed for their validity meeting the guidelines, rules, and restrictions of the contest. Those meeting the minimum guidelines will be eligible to move onto the next round of judging.
- The art must be original. Confirmation of this must be signed in the release form.
- A maximum of ten colors can be used on each art design.
- Art must be easily replicated on a concrete surface.
- Entries must be digital format, either .jpg, .png, or .pdf.
- The art must contain the theme: **Only Rain Goes Down The Drain**
- Artists may attach links or examples of previous original artwork when they submit their entry. The review panel may use these supplemental materials to decide between finalists.

All entries will be judged on whether the art:

- Educates about water quality and clearly enhances the theme: Only Rain Goes Down The Drain
- Easy to re-create – a complicated design might be interesting, but if it can't be replicated, it won't work.
- Creative, colorful, and original. We want the designs to be eye-catching. If people don't see it, then it won't be able to serve as an educational tool.
- Coherent and easy to understand the message. Don't try to fit every water quality or environmental topic into your art. Stick with the theme.
- All art should remain within the borders of the storm drain. The design should not extend into the surrounding sidewalks, roadways or cover the storm drain lid.
- Artwork is submitted as a high resolution .jpg, .png or .pdf file. Clarity of the art will be used in the judging portion. The art does not have to be made on a computer, only submitted in one of the approved file formats. For example, the art can be hand drawn and submitted as a .jpg, provided that the resolution and clarity are high.

How to enter:

Entries must be submitted by email to agmilam@forsythco.com. We will not accept entries submitted through the mail. All entries must be received by 5pm EST on Friday, March 6, 2026.

Each email must contain a .jpg, .png, or .pdf of the original work of art with signed entry and release forms. Larger emails may bounce back and not be received by Forsyth County. If your email was sent successfully, you will receive an automatic reply. If you have not received a reply, call 770-205-4550 ext. 7142 to confirm receipt.

Before emailing, title your design by the name of the artwork, not by your name. Designs will be judged anonymously.

Example art file name: The Wonderful Watershed

What should the chosen artists expect?

- If chosen, artists will complete their art installation during a one-week period. This will occur before April 12, 2026, weather permitting.
- Artists may be called upon for media events such as interviews or photo opportunities.
- Artists will receive formal recognition from Forsyth County Government.
- Service hours will be awarded for the time spent painting the storm drain.
- Storm Drains will be coated with primer prior to artist installation. A protective sealant and safety grip will be applied by staff after the murals are painted.
- Paint, brushes, and all necessary art supplies will be provided by Forsyth County.
- Artist must agree to installation guidelines and attend a meeting prior to painting.
- Participants retain the right to their art; however, by entering the contest you grant Forsyth County Government (and those authorized by Forsyth County Government) a royalty-free, perpetual, non-exclusive license to publicly display, distribute, reproduce, and create derivative works of the entries, in whole or in part, in any media now existing or later developed, for any Forsyth County Government purpose, including, but not limited to advertising and promotion on

its website and publications. Forsyth County Government will not be required to pay any additional compensation or seek any additional approval in connection with such uses.

What is the competition timeline?

- Monday, January 5, 2026 – Storm Drain Art competition opens
- Friday, March 6, 2026 – Storm Drain Art competition closes
- Judging begins the week of March 9, 2026 (Chosen artists will be notified by phone or email with art installation instructions.)
- Spring Break 2026 – Artists will begin and complete installation process.

Questions or concerns?

Contact Apryl Milam

agmilam@forsythco.com

770-205-4550 ext. 7142

Terms and Conditions:

- Storm Drain Art Contest begins 12:01am EST, January 5, 2026, and ends 5:00pm EST, March 06, 2026. By submitting an entry, each contest and their parent/legal guardian agrees to the rules of the contest.
- Contest is only open to students currently enrolled in a Forsyth County High School, Middle School or Homeschool Students.
- There is no entry fee and no purchase necessary to enter this competition. Offer is void where prohibited.
- Forsyth County Government does not accept responsibility for entries not received for whatever reason.
- Forsyth County Government reserves the right to cancel or amend the competition for any reason.
- Forsyth County Government does not guarantee the length of time art will be displayed publicly. Art can be removed at the discretion of Forsyth County Government.
- No cash alternatives to the prizes will be offered.
- The winner will be notified by phone or email.
- Employees of Forsyth County Government, contest judges or family of contest judges or committee members are exempt from participation.
- By entering this competition, the entrant and parent or legal guardian is indicating by agreement to be bound to these terms and conditions and rules and regulations.
- The winner and parent or legal guardian agree to the use of their name and image in public material.