

Maryland's Soil Conservation Districts by Katherine O. Rizzo and Kimberly K. Egan

Spring showers and warmer weather are on their way, which means mud, mud, and more mud. The only season muddier than winter is spring. Winter is mud season. Spring is muddier season. If there's one thing we know is right around the corner, it's mud.

We at the Maryland Horse Council thought this would be a good time to remind horse people everywhere that there is a network of helpful (and free) experts in Maryland to help you get a grip on your mud.

Each county in Maryland has a Soil Conservation District (SCD), funded by a combination of federal, state, and local governments. The districts are the result of the Soil Conservation Act passed by Congress in the wake of the 1930s Dust Bowl. During the Dust Bowl, millions of acres of grasslands in the South Central Plains were plowed under and planted with wheat at the same time that a multi-year drought descended on the mid-West. Without the deep roots of the native grasses to hold the topsoil in place, the soil was carried off by strong winds known as "black blizzards." The dust storms blocked out the sun, further weakening the remaining plants, and dirt and dust piled up in drifts. The Encyclopedia Britannica reports that about 1.2 billion tons of soil were lost under 100 million acres of the Great Plains between 1934 and 1935.

In response, the Soil Conservation Act created a national program to control and prevent soil erosion. SCDs were created to provide technical as-

sistance to farmers to help them design and install best management practices on their farms to protect natural resources. In Maryland, the primary goal of the SCDs is to protect the Chesapeake Bay and its many tributaries.

SCDs provide an invaluable resource for horse farmers. SCDs help landowners develop nutrient management plans, implement proper drainage projects, understand the importance of harrowing fields, and more. The SCDs also keep farmers up to date on the local, state, and national grants and cost-share funding available for conservation projects. In addition, SCDs work with horse and livestock operations to help manage manure more efficiently and improve pasture health.

SCDs can also help farm owners and managers create the stormwater management and sediment/erosion control plans that are required by Maryland law.

MHC encourages farm owners and farm managers to reach out to their county's SCD on a regular basis. That is the easiest way to keep best management practices current and improve farm and horse health while keeping costs low.

Below is a list of Maryland's Soil Conservation Districts with contact information. Please note that not all counties have an equine specialist, but all can help navigate conservation plans for your property.

For more information, see <https://mascd.net/>

ALLEGANY

Adam Heavner, District Manager
301-777-1747, ext. 3
aheavner@atlanticbnn.net
12407 Naves Cross Road, NE
Cumberland, MD 21502-8212
Website: alleganyscd.com

ANNE ARUNDEL

John Czajkowski, District Manager
410-571-6757
john@ascd.org
Heritage Office Center, 2662 Riva Road
Suite 150, MS #7001
Annapolis, MD 21401-7377
Website: ascd.org

BALTIMORE

James Ensor, District Manager
410-527-5920, ext. 3
jbensor@baltimorecountymd.gov
1114 Shawan Road, Suite 4
Cockeysville, MD 21030
Website: bcsd.org

CALVERT

Geoffrey Westbrook, District Manager
410-535-1521, ext. 3
geoffrey.westbrook@calvertcountymd.gov
489 Main Street, Suite 101
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
Website: calvertsoil.org

CAROLINE

John Shepard, District Manager
(410) 479-1202, ext. 3
john.shepard@maryland.gov
9194 Legion Road, Suite 3
Denton, MD 21629
Website: N/A

CARROLL

Matt McMahon, District Manager
410-848-8200, ext. 3
mattmcmahon@maryland.gov
698 J Corporate Center Court
Westminster, MD 21157
Website: carrollsoil.com

CATOCTIN and FREDERICK

Heather Hutchinson, District Manager
301-695-2803, ext. 3
HHutchinson@frederickcountymd.gov
92 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 230 North Amber
Frederick, MD 21702
Website: catoctinfrederickscd.com

CECIL

Chris Brown, District Manager
410-398-4411, ext. 3
chrisbrown@cecilsd.com
105 Chesapeake Blvd., Suite B-3
Elkton, MD 21921
Website: cecilsd.com

CHARLES

Luis Dieguez, District Manager
301-638-3028
luis.dieguez@charlesscd.com
4200 Gardiner Road
Waldorf, MD 20601
Website: charlesscd.com

JOIN THE MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL'S FARM STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE!

Contact Farm Stewardship Committee Chair: Jane Thery at greenhorseenterprises@gmail.com

MHC Farm Stewardship Committee Report, continued...

DORCHESTER

Karen Houtman, District Manager
410-228-5640, ext. 3
karen.houtman@maryland.gov
204 Cedar Street, Suite 200
Cambridge, MD 21613
Website: N/A

GARRETT

Roger Kitzmiller, District Manager
301-501-5856, ext. 3
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1916 Maryland Highway, Suite C
Mountain Lake Park, MD 21550
Website: garrettscd.org

HARFORD

Quintin Cornwell, District Manager
410-638-4828
quintin.cornwell@maryland.gov
3525 Conowingo Road, Suite 500
Street, MD 21154
Website: harfordscd.org

HOWARD

David Plummer, District Manager
410-313-0680
dplummer@howardcountymd.gov
14735 Frederick Road
Cooksville, MD 21723
Website: howardscd.org

KENT

Robert Baldwin, District Manager
410-778-5150, ext. 3
kentsoil@kentgov.org
122 Speer Road, Suite 4
Chestertown, MD 21620
Website: kentsoilandwaterconservationdistrict.org

MONTGOMERY

John Zawitoski, District Manager
301-590-2855
johnzawitoski@montgomerycountymd.gov
Ag Activity Center
18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, MD 20855
Website: montgomeryscd.org

PRINCE GEORGE'S

Steven E. Darcey, District Manager
301-574-5162, ext. 3
pgscd@verizon.net
5301 Marlboro Race Track Rd., Ste. 100
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
Website: pgscd.org

QUEEN ANNE'S

Anthony C. Riggi, District Manager
410-758-3136, ext. 3
anthony.riggi@maryland.gov
211 East Water Street
Centreville, MD 21617
Website: N/A

ST. MARY'S

Bruce A. Young, District Manager
301-475-8402, ext. 3
bruce.young@stmarysscd.com
26737 Radio Station Way, Suite B
Leonardtown, MD 20650
Website: stmarysscd.com

SOMERSET

Mark Carey, District Manager (acting)
410-621-9310 • mark.carey@md.nacdnet.net
30730 Park Drive, Howard H. Anderson Ag Bldg.
Princess Anne, MD 21853
Website: N/A

TALBOT

Shawn Smith, District Manager
410-822-1577, ext. 5
shawn.smith@maryland.gov
28577 Mary's Court, Suite 3
Easton, MD 21601
Website: talbotscd.com

WASHINGTON

Elmer D. Weibley, District Manager
301-797-6821, ext. 3
elmer@conservationplace.com
1260 Maryland Avenue, Suite 101
Hagerstown, MD 21740
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WICOMICO

Richard Glasgow, District Manager
410-546-4777, ext. 3
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2322-B Goddard Parkway
Salisbury, MD 21801
Website: wicomicoscd.org

WORCESTER

Doug Jones, District Manager
410-632-5439, ext. 3
doug.jones@maryland.gov
304 Commerce Street
Snow Hill, MD 21863-1008
Website: NA