

# How to be a Streamwatcher



More than 70 Streamwatchers monitor almost 100 sites in the Brodhead Watershed, acting as stewards of streams near their homes. Volunteers collect water quality data from one or more sites, working for one to two hours once a month. The data provides a graphic, long-term snapshot of the health of the streams. **This is a summary of the important work our volunteers do.**

## TESTING SITES

Test sites are chosen by Streamwatch team leaders for safety, convenience, and validity of test results. Volunteers are assigned a site near their homes if possible. Sites are marked with a "BWA Streamwatch Site" sign.



## TESTING AT THE SITE

As a scientific study, this procedure requires standardization and objectivity. Take your monthly readings from the same spot and at approximately the same time. Note the date, time, and weather, along with air and water temperatures, each time you test.



Two, and sometimes three, tests are performed streamside each month using equipment provided in a kit shared among team members. Each new Streamwatcher is trained in the use of the kits.

At streamside, measure pH levels (using the Hach kit) and Conductivity. Conductivity is measured in micro-siemens/centimeter (uS/cm) using the Hanna DIST3 meter. If the conductivity reading is above 200 uS/cm, also test for chloride in mg/l.

Record your results, as well as stream flow as High, Medium or Low, water clarity and color.



## AFTER THE TEST

Waste from the pH test can be safely disposed of on the land, away from the stream. Wash test tubes at home. Rinse the conductivity meter probe in distilled water and let it dry before replacing the cap.

## RECORD KEEPING

Record test results each month on field data sheets. Keep a different data sheet for each site you test. Your team leader will request a copy of your data periodically.

## RED FLAGS

If there is a significant change in any test or conditions at the site, notify your Team leader and the BWA office (570-839-1120) immediately. Take a water sample and refrigerate it until you can deliver it your Team Leader or BWA office. Complete an Incident Report Form and email or deliver it to your Team Leader.



*This is a brief summary of the Streamwatch procedure. The volunteer manual, with details and tips, is at [brodheadwatershed.org/SWVolunteerpage.html](http://brodheadwatershed.org/SWVolunteerpage.html).*

**Would you like to become a Streamwatcher? Contact BWA at 570-839-1120 or [info@brodheadwatershed.org](mailto:info@brodheadwatershed.org).**