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Lehigh Valley Sustainability Summit Set for Sept. 21

The rules are changing for recycling and stormwater runoff and that figures to be more expensive for municipalities, businesses, property owners and residents.

The Lehigh Valley Sustainability Summit, hosted by the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, will look to cut through some of the complexities of new government regulations.

The LVPC-sponsored summit, scheduled for September 21st at the Homewood Suites Center Valley, will include a session on Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) regulations. The session titled "MS4 and Your Property", will be moderated by LVPC Director of Environmental Planning Geoff Reese. MS4 is a state program that forces most Lehigh Valley municipalities to abide by rules designed to reduce pollutants into streams through stormwater runoff.

It's been in place for more than a decade, but as phased-in regulations increase, the consulting, engineering and infrastructure expenses of the program are now hitting home for many communities.

"Projects to reduce the amount of pollutants that get into the streams have the potential to be very expensive for some communities," Reese said. "Many will have to determine whether to seek fees from property owners and businesses."

A second session, titled "Recycling Chaos and What It Means to Your Business," will be moderated by Dieter Scheel, Vice President and Business Development Manager at Sustainability Waste Solutions. That session will explore China's ban of certain recyclable waste that has been coming from the U.S., including some plastics, and how that could impact communities and businesses.

Because the issues are so important to municipalities, Chamber of Commerce organizers are offering the summit to all municipal employee for half the ticket price. Anyone interested can register by contacting Asa Saidman at asas@lehighvalleychamber.org or by calling 610-810-6412.