

# Landmarks

## HIGH POINTS



## COMMUNITIES ADDRESSING STORMWATER

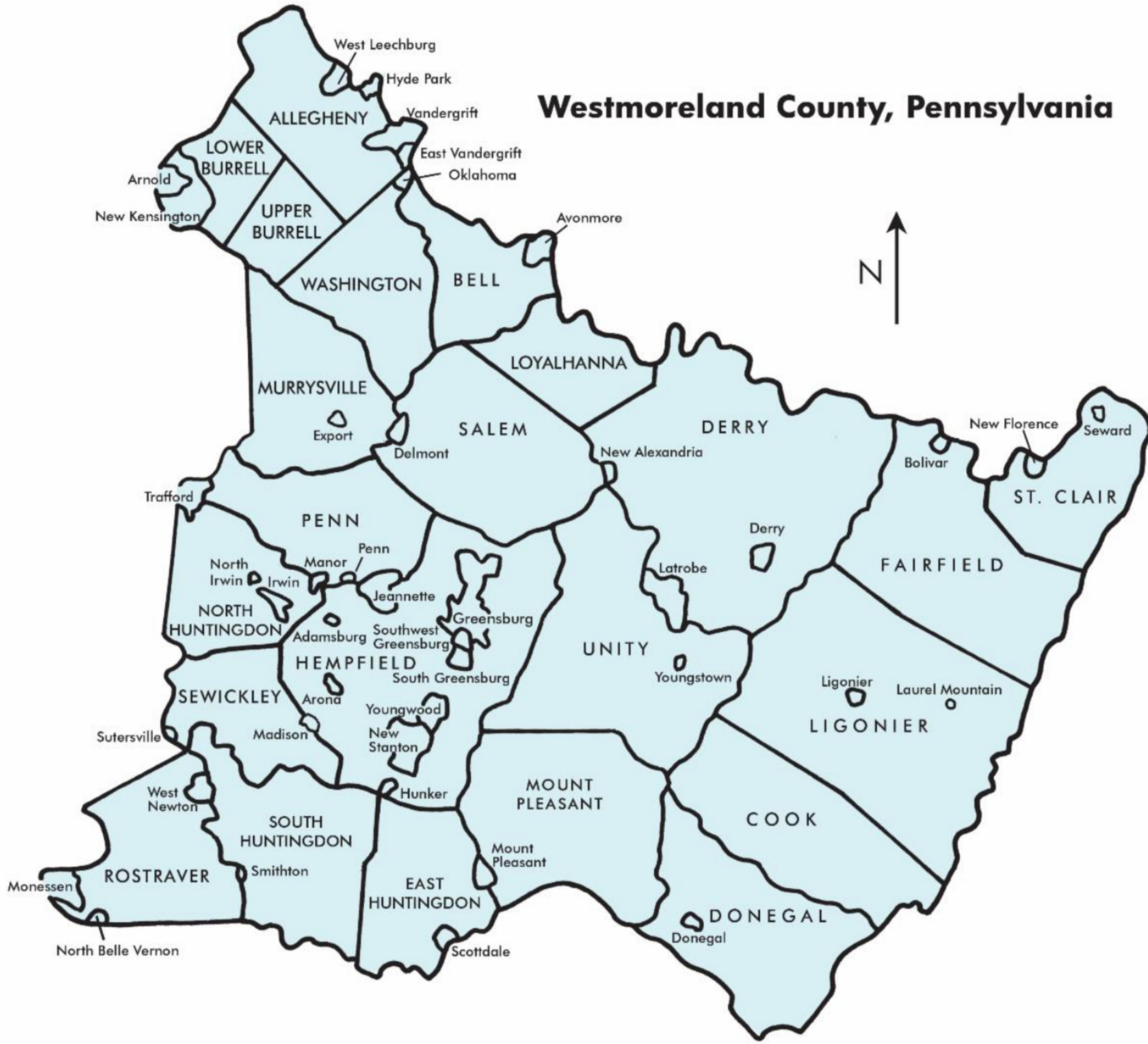
### District Staff Available to Help

After four years of gathering data, analysis, discussion, and public input, Westmoreland County has its first-ever official plan for caring for the water resources we all share.

The Integrated Water Resources Plan, approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and adopted by the Westmoreland County Commissioners this summer, came about because of a state law requiring every county in the Commonwealth to have a stormwater management plan.

The law also requires each municipality in the county to enact a stormwater ordinance that is consistent with the plan.

**Stormwater is one of our county's most pressing concerns, because it has the potential to impact both public safety and property.\* Experience has shown that the most effective way to manage stormwater is at the municipal level.**



### Customized for Each Community

Municipal officials throughout Westmoreland County are now working toward developing stormwater ordinances, which will delineate when stormwater has to be managed in their respective communities.

Because each of the 65 municipalities in Westmoreland County has different topography, different degrees of land development, and different stormwater management needs, each municipal ordinance will be somewhat different, and tailor-made for its community.

Older, more urban communities, for instance, with limited, aging infrastructure may elect to manage stormwater from smaller-sized land disturbances than communities that are more rural and have larger expanses of open space to soak up stormwater.

### Solid Starting Point for All

Although their particulars may be different, all municipalities have begun their ordinance work with the benefit of a solid starting point – a **model ordinance template developed by a volunteer working group of area engineers, solicitors, and municipal officials**. This template is available [here](#).

The model ordinance is flexible and gives many options for setting stormwater standards. It also allows municipalities and land developers to work together to solve existing stormwater problems as part of a new, land-development plan. Its “demonstrated equivalency” option also will help encourage redevelopment in some older communities.

Kathy Hamilton, landscape architect/stormwater technician for the District, stressed that the ordinances, once adopted, will apply only to future land development. “Homes and businesses and other kinds of development that already exist will not be affected,” she said.

**A free information webinar for municipal solicitors is being planned for August 6 from noon until 1 p.m. [Register now](#).**

**District staff members are available to answer questions and provide support for those developing stormwater ordinances. See our [website](#) for how to contact them**

As of this writing, most Westmoreland County municipalities are in the process of developing their ordinances, and two have already completed them. The deadline for adoption is this December 31.

\* Westmoreland County Hazard Mitigation Plan

## Westmoreland Conservation District

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Visit our website

