

Secure your scientific collection permit

- Check your state's Department of Natural Resources website for instructions on how to obtain a permit (Virginia monitors will use VA SOS Permit through IWLA)

Select monitoring site(s)

- Use the [Clean Water Hub to explore what streams](#) near you are already being monitored
- Check out our [Choosing a Site guidance](#) to locate a stream near you
- Be sure to find a site where you have safe access into the stream and permission to be on the property
- Name your site using a unique ID that won't be easily confused with another site

Build your kit

- Check with your program coordinator to see if they already have supplies for your team
- Review the [SOS equipment list](#) to determine what you need
- Contact the SOS team to see if any equipment funds are available

Monitor!

- You should monitor your sites twice a year, in the spring and fall
- Display the [SOS Monitoring Car Sign](#) when parking near your stream site
- Always have your permit with you for every monitoring session
- Do not monitor during inclement weather or high water conditions. Wait 1 week after significant rainfall to allow the stream to return to normal conditions

Submit your data

- Check with your program coordinator for specific instructions on uploading data
- Submit data to the [Clean Water Hub](#) to be quality assured by SOS staff
- Data are sent to the Chesapeake Bay Program annually

Next steps

- [Add chemical monitoring](#) to your routine to get a more complete picture of stream health
- Organize a clean up event for your stream or watershed
- Share your findings and [advocate for clean water](#) in your community
- Become a certified SOS Trainer and certify new monitors!