

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

“A Guide to Stormwater Management on School Campuses”

With Schuylkill Watershed Initiative Grant funding, the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary joined forces with the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) to help schools in the watershed better manage stormwater on their properties. One element of this effort was producing “A Guide to Stormwater Management on School Campuses.” This guide was distributed to schools, colleges, and universities throughout the region, providing facilities managers with assessment tools, along with steps and actions for implementing stormwater management practices on their properties and in the surrounding communities.

Projects detailed in the campus guide include creating container gardens, using rain barrels and installing rain gardens, planting trees, stream care, wildflower meadow installation, environmentally friendly maintenance practices, and more. In addition to protecting drinking water resources, these tools and practices also provide “green space”, restore and protect aquatic habitats, and improve the quality of life in the neighborhood.



Rain Barrels

A rain barrel collects and stores stormwater runoff from rooftops. By temporarily holding runoff during a rain event, a rain barrel prevents water from running directly into storm drains, rivers, or streams where it can cause erosion and pollute drinking water. In areas where there is a combined sewer system, like the City of Philadelphia, temporarily holding this runoff can also help add capacity to the sewer system and prevent sewer overflows to streets and rivers. Collected rainwater can be used for irrigation to trees and plants. Rain barrels can be purchased online or they can be built. Whether you buy or build a rain barrel, the most important thing to remember is that they are only effective as a stormwater management tool if the stored water is engaged in between storms, thereby





A reply card was provided in the guide for interested teachers to request assistance with stormwater management at their schools. Several responding schools were linked up with an organization called The Schuylkill Project, which used Schuylkill Watershed Initiative Grant funds to create hands-on environmental learning opportunities at those schools. A collaboration of the East Falls and Manayunk Development Corporations (along with other partners), the goal of The Schuylkill Project is to revitalize the Schuylkill River waterfronts and reconnect residents to the River for educational, economic, and recreational opportunities.



Already familiar with local schools, The Schuylkill Project is now positioned to begin on-the-ground activities utilizing projects in the campus guide at selected schools. Students from partnering schools in several different grades will improve stormwater management on their campuses by planting native trees, installing rain barrels, and creating rain gardens and native plant beds.



The Schuylkill Watershed Initiative Grant is a targeted watershed grant awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the completion of a suite of water quality improvement demonstration projects in the Schuylkill River Watershed. "The Guide to Stormwater Management on School Campuses" project is one of more than 40 projects that received funding from this source, in addition to other funds and/or support. The grant is administered by the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary and the Philadelphia Water Department.