



STORIES OF PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING HEALTHY WATERS

EPA Region 3 Water Protection Division

Urban Waters Grant Supports

Chester's Green Plan

Chester, Pennsylvania · July 9, 2015

The [Pennsylvania Horticultural Society](#) (PHS) is using an [EPA Urban Waters Small Grant](#) to train employees and under-skilled and at-risk residents of the City of Chester, PA, in maintaining trees and other green features to control stormwater pollution.

The effort is designed to complement Chester's revised comprehensive plan, which incorporates green infrastructure (GI) and greening as key components for a healthier and more sustainable environment. Over the past five years, PHS has partnered with Chester to plant over 1,500 trees, which provide cultural and economic as well as environmental benefits – provided that the trees can grow to their full potential canopy.

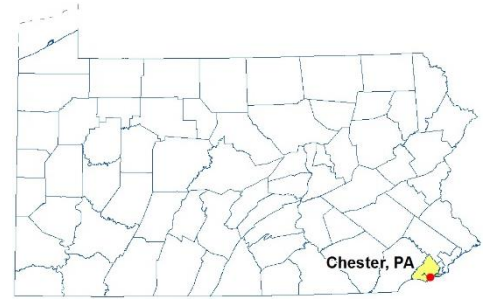
The project is designed to provide job-skill training about maintenance of GI and greening practices for municipal employees, under-skilled landscape laborers and at-risk youth. In addition to improving the employability of these target audiences, the training will also result in better long-term success for the GI and greening activities that are integral to Chester's future.

The training sessions include basic watershed concepts; tree and perennial installation and maintenance; invasive plant management; riparian buffer restoration; green stormwater infrastructure practices; sustainable turf care; and community engagement.

As of July 1, 2015, three training sessions had been held with current employees of the Chester Department of Parks, combining in-class presentation with outside hands-on demonstrations. The first session provided an introduction to watersheds, basic hydrology and conventional and green infrastructure. To augment this learning, the group visited one of the city's combined sewer outfalls and toured an existing riparian buffer.

The second session offered a hands-on activity illustrating the steps to design and construct a rain garden. The third session focused on tree planting, providing an abbreviated PHS Tree Tenders® course focusing on basic tree biology, typical stressors, proper planting techniques and basic tree care. The class went outside and planted a dozen trees in a nearby park.

According to PHS, participants thus far have proven eager to learn the new skills, which they can immediately apply to their everyday work. This series of trainings will then be adapted and repeated as job-skill training for those not currently employed in grounds management, including at-risk youth and unemployed or underemployed individuals through the city's re-entry and workforce coordination programs. The grant was made possible when the [Urban Waters Federal Partnership](#) was expanded to the Delaware River Basin in 2013.



AT A GLANCE

- Chester employees and residents learning green techniques to control stormwater through \$41,679 EPA Urban Waters Small Grant.



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