

# The Green Team Gazette

Volume 1, Issue 5, page

February 2009: Rainy Days Super-Sized Edition

## April Showers Bring May Flowers... So Start Planning Now!



Even though it is still the mushy, slushy days of winter, it is not too soon to start planning your spring!

## Reduce Runoff: Slow It Down, Spread It Out, & Soak It In



For a quick & informative overview on managing stormwater runoff, this 9 minute video collaboration between the U.S. EPA and the U.S. Botanic Garden is a "must see." Go to <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/lid/video.html>



## For Even More...

To view the "Who Will Stop the Rain" Rainscaping power point presentation that Tim Decker and Vicki Dabrowka

presented at the February 4-6, 2009 MAEOE (Maryland Association of Environmental Outdoor Educators) Conference, go

[http://www.gics.org/environmental\\_studies.htm](http://www.gics.org/environmental_studies.htm)  
(See also <http://www.maeoe.org>)

### The Green Team Gazette

is a publication co-sponsored by the founders of



CynerGreen, CGKidz, and Gibson Island Country School, a Green School in Pasadena, Maryland. Our mission is to educate and share ways to "go green"—both big and small--and be environmentally-proactive at home, in school, and beyond. It is written by Vicki Dabrowka, and edited by Danelle Hoffer. Additional contributors include: G.I.C.S. Science Teacher Tim Decker; G.I.C.S. Head of School Laura Kang; CGKidz creator, thirteen-year old Riley Hoffer. To learn more visit [www.cynergreen.com](http://www.cynergreen.com),

[www.cgkidz.com](http://www.cgkidz.com), and [www.gics.org](http://www.gics.org).



Please print on recycled paper!

## Who Will Stop The Rain?

When the storm water starts to escape, It's definitely time to "rainscape." What is rainscaping?



**R**unoff from storms carries dirt and toxins to our waterways.

**A** rain barrel holds rainwater for you to water your plants without using "new" water.

**I**nivate your downspout water to go to a rain barrel or a rain garden.

**N**ative, water-loving plants are best in a rain garden because they won't ever get over-soaked.

**S**low down storm water so you can use it, not lose it.

**C**onserving water starts here...

**A**s does improving water quality and building habitats in your watershed.

**P**lan creative solutions to solve water pollution.

**E**veryone benefits when you collect & reuse your storm water.

### Rain Barrels

= A holding tank at the base of your gutter's downspout to collect rain water that would normally oversoak the ground or head to the sewer. Use the water to water your garden!

### Rain Gardens

= A specially designed garden with water-loving plants that also serves as a drainage area to collect storm water & prevent yard flooding. Plants thrive in your yard's flood-zone.

### Impervious Surfaces

= Areas like your roof, sidewalk, driveway, and roadways where water won't soak in. When it storms, runoff is produced, which carries pollutants with the water as it finds its way to storm drains.

After a brief introduction to your students, have them make do one or more of the following:

- write an acrostic like the one above;
- create a poster;
- invent a game;
- use it to teach cause & effect (in regards to how life is with and without a storm water management plan);
- take advantage of winter's last snow to measure/compare the snow-to-water quality when melted...build critical thinking skills: why might the snow be dirty??

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## Sing a Song of Raindrops

Introduce 1 of these 2 songs to help teach a little bit about the storm water. Or better yet, rework the lyrics of a personal favorite to create a song of your own!

### The Rain From the Sky

*(Sung to the tune of "The Wheels on the Bus")*

The rain from the sky falls down, down, down.  
All around...to the ground,  
The rain from the sky falls down, down, down,  
Where can it go?

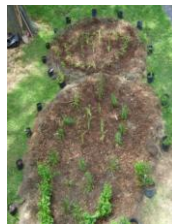


If the rain hits the hard concrete  
It flows to the street...carrying all it meets  
The hard surfaces are the defeat  
Washing the rain away.



But if that rain goes down a gutter spout  
To a holding tank...a virtual water bank,  
A rain barrel is what you will thank,  
To save that water for another day.

Or if a rain garden is what rain finds,  
Plants won't mind...they will start to climb.  
Create a garden and take some time  
To aim for rain to stay.



The rain from the sky falls down, down, down.  
All around...to the ground  
Make a plan... that is good and sound,  
To re-use yesterday's rain today!!

### Our Storm Water Truths

*(Sung to the tune of "My Favorite Things" from The Sound of Music)*

Raindrops in barrels falling straight from your gutters,  
Down rooftops & spout drains, splashing windows & shutters.  
Collecting there, waiting, to later be used,  
These are a few of our storm water truths.

Planting a garden where rain tends to fall;  
Taking advantage of water that stalls.  
Plants will drink it right up and be infused;  
These are a few of our storm water truths.

Impermeable surfaces, like parking lots  
Cause runoff that's wasted, without any thought.  
Flooding, pollution, erosion—We're through!!  
Do something about it with our storm water truths.

Take some action...  
Help Earth's water...  
Make a hydro-plan.  
Then simply remember our storm water truths,  
In order to lend a hand!

## All The Way To The Ocean

Looking for the perfect book to teach youngsters what they can do at home to make a difference to their water-ways, both near & far? Check out Joel Harper's book All The Way to the Ocean (2006) to highlight the causality between storm drains and ocean pollution. For more information on go to [http://www.allthewaytotheocean.com/Frameset\\_new.html](http://www.allthewaytotheocean.com/Frameset_new.html)



## Top 10 List

Since the #1 type of water pollution comes from urban runoff, know that you are polluting our waterways when you...

- 1) Let grass/yard clippings get into storm drains where bacteria can grow.
- 2) Litter cigarette butts, which are the #1 litter item in the world. (See [www.cigarettlitter.org](http://www.cigarettlitter.org) or [www.litterbutt.com](http://www.litterbutt.com) for more info)
- 3) Dispose of motor oil improperly.
- 4) Over-fertilize your yard.
- 5) Don't pick up animal waste.
- 6) Hose down your driveway—oil and chemicals on your personal parking lot flow with water to storm drains.
- 7) Wash your car in your yard—even soap suds create eco-hazards.
- 8) Don't pick up trash you see—it can get blown into waterways. Plastics can break down, turning into environmental hazards which animals then eat!
- 9) Dump paint, paint thinners, cleaners, or other chemicals in your yard.
- 10) Don't fix your car's oil or gas leaks.



"No one has the right to use America's rivers and America's waterways, that belong to all the people, as a sewer. The banks of a river may belong to one man or one industry or one state, but the waters which flow between the banks should belong to all the people."

— *President Lyndon B. Johnson,*  
upon signing the Clean Water Act of 1965

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## Rainy Day Web-Resources

RainScaping.org <http://www.rainscaping.org>

The Groundwater Foundation: Kids Corner  
<http://www.groundwater.org/kc/kc.html>  
free downloadable including "Be Waterwise in School"

Blue Planet Links: Bringing People Together Over Water  
<http://www.blueplanetlinks.ca/>

American Water Works Association: Drinking Tap.org  
<http://www.drinktap.org/kidsdnn/?v=1>

North American Association for Environmental Activities  
<http://eelink.net/pages/EE+Activities+--+Groundwater>  
Among others, check out the Edible Aquifer link

Blue Grass Rain Garden Alliance Rain Garden Lesson Plan  
<http://www.bluegrassraingardenalliance.org/?q=node/47>

Pervious & Impervious Surfaces Lesson Plans  
<http://www.beslter.org/perspective/perspective.aspx?action=get-attachment&page=education:SchoolyardHydroEcologyHandbook&name=Hydro-Ecology+Handbook+--+draft+2+--+Lesson+3.pdf>

USGS Water Science for Schools Links  
<http://qa.water.usgs.gov/edu/links.html>



### Mark Your Calendars:

World Wetlands Day  
(yearly, February 2nd)

[http://www.wetland.org/education\\_wetlandsday.htm](http://www.wetland.org/education_wetlandsday.htm)  
or <http://ramsar.org>

Save our Seas <http://www.saveourseas.com/minisites/kids/>

Water Pollution Guide <http://www.water-pollution.org.uk/>

ChesSIE: Chesapeake Science on the Internet for Educators  
<http://www.bayeducation.net/>

EPA's Water Sourcebook  
<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/kids/wsb/>

US EPA Non-Source Pollution Site for Kids  
<http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/kids/>

Project WET: Water Education Foundation  
<http://www.watereducation.org/>

School Leadership in Urban Runoff Reduction Project  
<http://livingclassrooms.org/slurrrp/> for students grades 4-8

Windows on Our Waters Environmental Education Program  
<http://www.windowsonourwaters.org/index.php>

The Ocean Project—7 Seas Commitment  
[http://www.theoceanproject.org/cgi/pledge\\_form.php](http://www.theoceanproject.org/cgi/pledge_form.php)

The Right Size for a Rain Garden  
<http://www.kidsgardening.com/Dig/digdetail.taf?Type=Art&id=2142>

**RAINSCAPING WORKS EVERYWHERE**  
*To Keep Our Waterways Clean*

green roof  
tree planter  
tree planter boxes  
green roof  
tree planter  
tree planter boxes  
bioswale in parking lot with water & drought tolerant plants  
permeable pavement  
trees  
rain barrel  
dimensional drains to rain garden  
bioswale  
canal  
permeable pavers  
permeable asphalt

**WHEN IT RAINS IT DRAINS**

Reduce runoff  
**SLOW IT DOWN**

**SPREAD IT OUT**

**SOAK IT IN!!!**

For beautiful solutions to water pollution, visit  
**RainScaping.org**

Acknowledgment: RainScaping Campaign sponsors—Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program, and RainScaping Campaign Partners.  
For beautiful solutions to water pollution, visit [www.RainScaping.org](http://www.RainScaping.org).

For this and other rainscaping signs, go to  
<http://www.chesapeakeecologycenter.org/>