



# Education Updates

March 2007

## Stormwater U:

Designing to Meet Volume Control Requirements in the East Metro

The East Metro Water Resource Education program recently held its first two workshops in the Stormwater U training series. Over 90 people attended the two workshops, held on February 6 at the Family Means Center in Stillwater and on March 1 at the Bayport Public Library. The workshops were intended to teach design engineers and city staff in the east metro area how to meet the volume control requirements of local watershed agencies by using infiltration and other innovative stormwater management techniques. People attending the workshops included city and county staff from the east metro area as well as private consultants working with cities and developers in the Twin Cities. There were also several people from outside the east metro that attended the workshops, some from as far away as Brainerd and Fargo.

Presenters at the Stormwater U workshops included Karen Kill of Brown's Creek Watershed District, Kurt Leuthold of Barr Engineering, Rusty Schmidt of URS Inc. and Jay Riggs of Washington Conservation District. The speakers walked participants through the basic steps to meeting volume control requirements, beginning with an overview of the similarities and differences between local watershed rules, and continuing with design basics such as soil testing and amendments, plant selection and aesthetics. At the end of the workshop, Kurt, Rusty and Jay shared tips for successful construction and maintenance of infiltration projects.

Overall, participants indicated a high level of satisfaction with the workshop content and speakers, although there were some complaints about overcrowding at the February 6 workshop. We have not yet totaled the expenses for Stormwater U, but it appears that the East Metro Education Program will make a profit of \$500-1000 from the workshops, which will be added to the education materials budget. Future Stormwater U workshops will target planners, builders and contractors in the east metro area.



*At the Feb. 6 Stormwater U workshop, Kurt Leuthold and Rusty Schmidt spoke to a full house*

## Landscaping for Water Quality:

Contractor Training Program  
April 4 - Roseville City Hall

Next month, the East Metro education program will co-sponsor a workshop for landscapers, contractors and nursery owners. At the half-day seminar, participants will learn how to construct and design commercial and residential raingardens. There is space for 80 people at the workshop, but seats are filling fast. If you know of someone who may be interested in attending, please have them contact Angie Hong at 651-275-1136 x.35 or [angie.hong@mnwcd.org](mailto:angie.hong@mnwcd.org). The workshop is free and includes a full breakfast. A follow-up "hands-on" session is planned for late summer.

## Welcome to our new members!

City of Dellwood, City of Forest Lake and City of Willernie



# Blue Thumb Program Takes Off

No longer limited to the east metro, the Blue Thumb - Planting for Clean Water program is now “blooming” throughout the Twin Cities area. Over 40 members have joined onto the Blue Thumb program, including watershed agencies, cities, and conservation districts, as well as nursery owners, landscapers and non-profit organizations.

This new and growing Blue Thumb team is working on a number of

projects, including designing a 2-hour introductory course for Blue Thumb, recruiting landscapers and garden centers throughout the metro area to plant and sell natives and raingarden plants, and developing promotional materials. If you are interested in learning more, the group will be meeting next on March 16, from 8:30-10:30am at Capitol Region Watershed District.

In early February, Angie Hong visited libraries throughout Washington County to deliver Blue Thumb information kiosks. These kiosks, sponsored by local East Metro education partners, will give residents easy access to information about grants and upcoming workshops to help them put Blue Thumb planting projects in the ground.

Throughout the spring, Angie will be speaking for lakes’ and neighborhood associations, public meetings and garden groups. If you would like a Blue Thumb presentation or educational materials for an upcoming event, please contact Angie. We are also looking for people to host “Blue Thumb parties” at their homes for 10-15 neighbors.



*Dave Bucheck, Vice President of Valley Branch Watershed District, visits a Blue Thumb kiosk at the Lake Elmo library.*



## MS4 Toolkits

We are currently in the running for a \$40,000 grant from the MPCA to develop and distribute educational materials for cities to use when conducting stormwater education.

Our preliminary grant application has been approved, and the MPCA has requested that we submit a full application. Award recipients will be notified by June.

## NEMO

Project NEMO provides non-point source education for municipal officials. On March 8 and 9, the Twin Cities working group will be conducting interviews to hire a regional coordinator for the NEMO program. Once the new hire is in place, we can begin working with that person to coordinate NEMO workshops for communities in the East Metro.

## SWPPP's

The MPCA recently sent out SWPPP annual report worksheets for MS4 communities. Please contact Angie if you need figures to complete the education component of the report. You can also attach a copy of the East Metro Water Resource Education Program 2006 education plan and annual report.

On Monday, April 9, Washington County will hold a public meeting to review their SWPPP. The meeting will be held from 4-5:30pm in Room 21 of the Government Center. During the first hour of the meeting, we will be discussing opportunities for collaboration among MS4 communities in Washington County. Please join us for the discussion if you are able.

### Founding Members of East Metro Water Resource Education Program:

Browns Creek Watershed District • City of Stillwater • Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization • South Washington Watershed District • Valley Branch Watershed District • Washington Conservation District • Washington County

