

PRESS RELEASE

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Radnor and Lower Merion Township Residents to be Part of the Pollution Solution *Workshops to help tackle stormwater pollution and beautify properties*

(Rosemont, PA) — Garrett Hill Coalition (GHC), a local civic organization, has been awarded a \$4,100 grant by the Water Resources Education Network, a project of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund for its project titled: “*Managing Stormwater in Our Back Yards: Valley Run, Radnor Township.*” Funding will support educational workshops and demonstration projects for residents of Radnor and Lower Merion Townships to learn about ways to reduce polluted runoff and remedy flooding problems using landscaping amenities like rain gardens and rain barrels.

GHC is working in the effort with project partners Radnor Township; Garrett Hill Community Enhancement Trust; Memorial Library of Radnor Township; Villanova Urban Stormwater Partnership; Delaware Riverkeeper Network; Aqua Pennsylvania; Chanticleer, A Pleasure Garden; and Bryn Mawr Boy Scout Troop #19. The group plans to conduct a rain garden workshop this fall to help homeowners learn everything they need to know about rain gardens from start to finish. The goal is to encourage residents to install rain gardens on their own properties to help filter out pollutants and keep them from washing into waterways like Valley Run, a stream that originates on the campus of Villanova University and eventually flows to the Delaware River.

The coalition plans to build a demonstration rain garden in Radnor Township’s Clem Macrone Park. A rain garden is an attractive native plant garden designed to capture, soak up, and filter rainwater before it enters local water bodies. The group also plans to conduct a community workshop and demonstration project in the spring that will focus on the use of rain barrels, which collect water from downspouts for use in watering planting beds and lawns.

“Everybody can do their part,” said Paul Overbeck, project co-chair. “Rain gardens are low cost and easy to install, and incredibly effective at reducing water pollution, especially if they are placed in clusters. They function like mini-forests that help slow down, soak up and filter polluted runoff from rooftops, driveways, parking lots and other hard surfaces,” continued Mr. Overbeck. “They act like a sponge to absorb water back into the ground and filter it naturally through native plants. Rain barrels are a great way to catch the rain and use it later.”

The demonstration sites will be located in Clem Macrone Park, a nine acre park in Rosemont. The Valley Run stream runs through the Park, which lies within the Darby Creek Watershed and drains to the Delaware River. Though not large in area compared to other watersheds, the Darby Creek Watershed is home to a population of approximately 500,000 people, with an average density of nearly 10 persons per acre.

Because the area is heavily paved, when it rains far less water soaks naturally into the ground to replenish groundwater. During a storm, streams can quickly rise and escalate into flooding, and then quickly decrease to a trickle after the rain stops. The flash floods erode stream banks, scour away the natural pools and riffles which are critical to plants, fish, and insects. “Rain gardens are very affordable options for homeowners compared with traditional pipe and drain systems, and require minimal time or skill to maintain each year,” continued Mr. Overbeck.

The Project has been made possible through a Community Watershed Education Grant awarded by the Water Resource Education Network (WREN), a project of the PA League of Women Voters Citizen Education Fund. Grant funding is through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection’s Nonpoint Source Management Program and Section 319 of the federal Clean Water Act, administered by the Environmental Protection Agency.

How can you help reduce water pollution? Every drop of rain you keep on your property helps to keep our local waters clean. You can make a difference by installing rain barrels, rain gardens, planting trees, and educating yourself. Other ways to ensure there is enough clean water include picking up pet waste, properly disposing of household chemicals, such as paints and cleaning supplies, sweeping driveways and sidewalks instead of hosing them, and washing cars at car wash facilities or on lawns rather than in driveways, where it can runoff to local streams.

For more information on upcoming events to protect clean water, visit <http://www.savegarrethill.com>.

And remember: only rain down the drain.

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The Garrett Hill Coalition is a civic association in the Garrett Hill section of Radnor Township which aims to monitor, facilitate, and support activities that will preserve and enhance Garrett Hill.

Project Summary

Garrett Hill Coalition – Delaware County

Grant Amount: \$4,100

Project Title: *Managing Stormwater in Our Back Yards: Valley Run, Radnor Township*

Partners: Radnor Township; Garrett Hill Community Enhancement Trust; Memorial Library of Radnor Township; Villanova Urban Stormwater Partnership; Delaware Riverkeeper Network; Aqua Pennsylvania; Chanticleer, A Pleasure Garden; Bryn Mawr Boy Scout Troop #19

Focus:

The partners will demonstrate a variety of solutions that help improve water quality by reducing storm water impacts, including rain gardens and rain barrels. The funding will support two workshops to educate residents about how to protect Valley Run and other local streams and encourage adoption of water-friendly practices. The project will conduct workdays to create rain barrel and rain garden demonstration sites, install interpretive signs, and to conduct seasonal streamside buffer and garden maintenance.