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Water Pages eNewsletter

[Rain Creates Opportunities]

The Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) Water Resources Program has partnered with Bill Hoffman, National/American Water Management, for the past several years on a variety of rainwater harvesting projects throughout New Jersey. Rainwater has been a recurring theme for the past 20 years of Bill's career. As a waterproofing contractor who has waterproofed over 20,000 foundations in the Tri-State area, he's in constant demand by builders and developers who need to protect the homes and buildings they construct. Bill knows the power of rainwater. He now harnesses that



power by designing and installing rainwater harvesting systems that allow the collection, storage, and reuse of the rainwater.

In partnership with the RCE Water Resources Program, he's installed systems ranging from 55 gallons to well over 5,000 gallons. New Jersey is considered a rain rich state with over 36 inches of rainfall per year. Despite being plentiful at times, rain creates stormwater runoff issues, impacts water quality, contributes to combined sewer overflows (CSOs) and more often than not, flows down the drain. Why not collect the rain, store it, and reuse it when and where you need it?



The benefits of rainwater are that it is naturally soft, free of hard mineral deposits and fluoride, and is naturally distilled making it an ideal source of water for irrigation. Bill and his crews have installed rainwater harvesting systems in dozens of community gardens where access to water is often non-existent. As more inner city residents create a sustainable lifestyle, access to collected rainwater for community gardens allows the gardens to yield a bounty of fruits and vegetables without needing to increase expenses in establishing a potable water source.

The collected rainwater has also been used in the municipal and commercial market to wash police cars and trash trucks; the rainwater harvesting systems have also been connected to irrigation systems to supplement potable water supplies and reduce costs on water use.

The practice of rainwater harvesting is centuries old as past civilizations valued water as a critical life element. Bill's goal is to promote rainwater harvesting along with the efforts and influence of the RCE Water Resources Program's mission by installing one rain barrel or one rainwater harvesting system at a time. Bill practices what he preaches; he looks forward to



rainy days as he knows he's collecting thousands of gallons of rainwater at his home and business from a one inch rain event. Rain continues to create opportunities; hopefully rainwater harvesting will benefit New Jersey residents for years to come.

[Upcoming Workshops]

- **Stormwater Management in Your Backyard Workshop** on Thursday, March 19th from 9-1 pm! Registration starts at 8:30 am and will be held at Ender Hall, Rm E155C, Bergen Community College in Paramus. Join the RCE Water Resources Program at this complimentary workshop to learn about how to

install a rain garden in your own backyard. To register for the event, please complete the [registration form](#).

- **3rd Annual Camden SMART Forum** on Friday, March 20th from 9-2:30 pm. The event will be held at the Salvation Army Ray & Joan Kroc Corps Community Center, 1865 Harrison Ave., Camden, NJ 08105. To register for the event, please complete the [registration form](#).
- **Green Infrastructure Workshop for Property Developers and Stakeholders** on Tuesday, March 24th from 8:30-11 am! Hosted by NY/NJ Baykeeper, the conference will be free of charge and will be held at the NJ Transportation Planning Authority, 1085 Raymond Blvd., 17th Floor, Newark, NJ 07102. To register for the event, please complete the [registration form](#).

[Seeking Volunteers in the Barnegat Bay!]

The Barnegat Bay Watershed Ambassador is seeking volunteers to come help out with projects this spring!

The first event is being held on Saturday, March 14th at 9am in Manchester Township. Ocean County Lands Trust has recently acquired 1,700 acres of undeveloped property. Over the years this space has accumulated garbage and has been subjected to illegal dumping. Volunteers are needed to assist the Ocean County Land Trust staff and the AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador to help clean up some of the larger areas of concern. There will be a central location for parking and then teams will break off and drive into the areas and carry out the garbage. A thank you BBQ will be held on site immediately following the event.

In addition, on Saturday, March 21st at 9am (with a rain date of the 28th), there will be a dune grass planting at Island Beach State Park. Volunteers will help plant American Beach Grass (*Ammophila breviligulata*) plugs. This grass is essential to dune health. Our coastal dunes are the best protection against raging storms that would otherwise damage the coastline. This is also a great opportunity for learning about restoration!

Lastly, if you haven't had a chance yet to experience what a macroinvertebrate is and why they matter, now is your chance! This spring there will be an event open to people of all ages and expertise at Stockton College to learn about sampling these macroinvertebrates, identifying them, and learning about why they serve as environmental indicators. You'll get the chance to see these organisms up close as well as their habitat! This is an opportunity to get outdoors and expand your knowledge of a freshwater ecosystem.



To sign up for any of these events, find out more about each one, or learn about other volunteer opportunities, please contact [GraceAnne Taylor](#) the AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador for the Barnegat Bay.

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