

Prince George's County

DEPARTMENT OF THE
ENVIRONMENT



january 2015

Green Scene
newsletter



Rushern L. Baker, III
County Executive



The DoE Mission

The Department of the Environment works for a healthy, beautiful and sustainable County through programs that provide clean water, flood control, recycling and waste management, animal management and pet adoption in partnership with residents and other stakeholders.



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environment.mypgc.us

Dear Friend,

As I have often written in these pages, the environmental responsibilities before us are too great for the government to do alone. We will only succeed to the degree that we continually engage and empower others.

In this issue are three great examples of how your Department of the Environment is leveraging the talent, creativity and power of others to make our County clean, green, healthy and beautiful.

This year, we are giving out more than a \$1 million in grants in our communities for clean water and related sustainability efforts. We are excited to have the help of these new partners to achieve great things together.

We have also partnered with Prince George's Community College to provide workforce training in stormwater infrastructure...building rain gardens, rain barrels and other facilities to naturally capture and filter our water to stop runoff pollution. Twenty students have already graduated from our class and we hope to double that amount this coming semester.

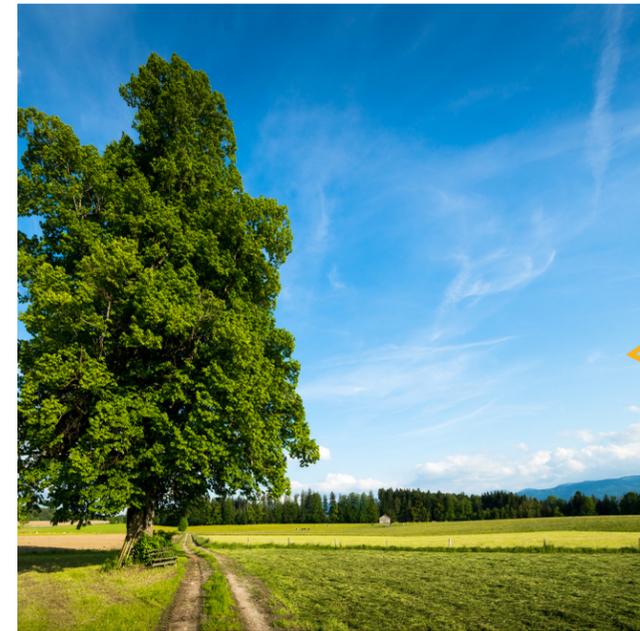
Finally, we are excited to award the first Environmental Public Art grant in the County. DoE has partnered with our local Arts and Humanities Council to solicit and select a team of artists that will install an educational sculpture made from recycled materials.

These three partnership initiatives were all inaugural events. This means that we are doing more than ever to achieve the work before us. This also means that there will be more opportunities for your town, church, community or household to participate in the future.

We look forward to your partnership.

Best regards,

Adam Ortiz
Director



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The Green Scene newsletter is a monthly publication of the Department of the Environment. We welcome story suggestions, photos and special event articles.

For more information, please contact the Communications Office at (301) 883-5952.

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1

Alice Ferguson Foundation
\$23,836

This grant funds the development of a clean water educational course for citizens who are interested in obtaining stormwater management jobs.

2

City of District Heights
\$34,862

This grant will support the design and installation of a highly visible rain garden to allow the area to better handle stormwater runoff while promoting green infrastructure.

\$1 MILLION IN COUNTY GRANTS AWARDED TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

3

Town of Landover Hills
\$126,578

Funding through this project will install rain gardens, a bioretention swale and permeable pavers as a centerpiece in a community park.

4

The Low Impact Development Center
\$55,895

This project will provide a highly visible demonstration area for the seven stormwater practices promoted by the Prince George's County's Rain Check Rebate Program.

5

Anacostia Watershed Society
\$48,000

This grant will educate and train residents in watershed protection issues and empower them to design and implement projects that prevent stormwater runoff and engage additional community members.

Prince George's County Government and the Chesapeake Bay Trust announced funding for 13 new projects to support stormwater restoration efforts throughout Prince George's County. The collaborative Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program was created earlier this year to encourage on-the-ground restoration activities that reduce nutrient and sediment pollution and community education activities that engage Prince George's County neighborhoods, faith-based organizations, non-profits and residents in the restoration and protection of local rivers, streams, parks and other natural resources. In total, \$1,050,000 was awarded through 13 projects.

6

Town of Forest Heights
\$49,794

This grant will train a team of high school students to water, weed and mulch 500 street trees as well as educate homeowners about the benefits of trees on their own properties.

7

City of College Park
\$66,180

This project will treat stormwater flowing from roadways and demonstrate the use of bioretention, tree planting and tree boxes for improved stormwater management.

8

City of Greenbelt
\$187,700

This project will include the redesign, retrofit and treatment of impervious surface, replacing it with low impact development techniques and environmental site design practices.

9

Pheasant Run Home Owner's Association, Inc.
\$11,730

This grant will fund a citizen engagement campaign focused on erosion, stormwater runoff and pet waste reduction.

"Prince George's County residents and local businesses alike are doing their part to help protect the rivers and streams of our County and the broader Chesapeake Bay watershed," said Adam Ortiz, Director of the Prince George's County Department of the Environment. "Through this partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Trust, we are able to implement projects that not only reduce polluted runoff from entering local waters, but also educate our residents, neighborhoods, communities of faith and others on how they can partner with us to help improve our community."

10

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
\$25,000

This initiative will include workshops to educate faith leaders on stormwater runoff and provide tools to help congregations overcome technical and financial obstacles to project implementation.

The Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program sought proposals in two specific areas: water quality projects that achieve nutrient and/or sediment reduction (funding from \$20,000 - \$200,000 was available for each project); and engagement projects that aim to involve residents in efforts to improve local watersheds (\$5,000 - \$50,000 was available per project). The projects include on-the-ground efforts such as rain gardens, bioretention practices and impervious pavement removal, as well as outreach campaigns related to green workforce development and stormwater management. Non-profit organizations, community associations, civic groups, and faith-based organizations were encouraged to apply, as well as municipalities, higher educational institutions and public agencies.

11

The Empowerment Institute
\$152,145

This grant will remove 20,000 square feet of existing asphalt and replace it with stormwater facilities with native plants to help filter and store rain.

12

Neighborhood Design Center
\$79,308

Funding will assist community groups, small municipalities, schools and faith-based organizations with creating a comprehensive plan for how they can retain and treat stormwater on their property, rather than having it flow into storm drains and local waterways.

"These stormwater practices truly accomplish two goals: improving water quality and improving our communities. It's a classic win-win," said Jana Davis, Executive Director of the Chesapeake Bay Trust. "This new partnership with Prince George's County allows nonprofit organizations like faith-based organizations, homeowners associations, community groups and others to play a much-desired larger role in the community effort to restore our collective green spaces and waterways."

13

Alice Ferguson Foundation
\$188,972

This grant includes construction of a rooftop rainwater collection system and cistern, a rain garden and a bioswale, as well as educational programming for students, teachers and Prince George's County residents.

In addition to these 13 grants, the Chesapeake Bay Trust also announced funding for five new projects in partnership with Prince George's County through the collaborative Rain Check Rebate Program. For more information on both grant partnerships, visit www.cbtrust.org.

ANIMAL
MANAGEMENT

Rodney C. Taylor
DoE Associate Director

3750 Brown Station Road
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

WHEN IT'S COLD OUTSIDE, PETS GET COLD TOO!

Follow these 'pawtection' tips to
keep your pet safe in cold weather

Can't stand being outside in the cold temperatures? Imagine how your pet feels. When frigid air hits, the Prince George's County Animal Management Division reminds pet owners that if it's too cold for you to be outside, it's too cold for your pets and advises owners to keep their animals indoors and to closely monitor their exposure to winter elements. But if your pet must stay outdoors, County law requires you to provide the following protection:

- A dog house of appropriate size that is dry, draft free and elevated off the ground;
- A wind flap attached to the doghouse to keep cold air out and warm air in;
- Non-absorbent bedding like straw or wood shavings to help keep the dog warm; and
- Fresh drinking water; routinely check your pet's drinking water to make sure it is not frozen and use a secured container to prevent tipping.

Other cold weather safety tips pet owners should consider include:

- Keep kittens and puppies under six months, and small or short-haired dogs inside;
- Consider indoor house training for puppies as they do not handle cold temperatures like their mature counterparts;
- Consider dressing your pet in specially made coats or sweaters; some pet owners also use booties or other shoe-like foot protection;
- Increase protein in your pet's diet to help keep their fur/hair healthy;
- Don't let your dog off its leash in the snow or ice; they can easily become lost and snow and ice can be dangerous when they are running loose;
- Make sure your pet always wears ID tags and is properly licensed and microchipped;
- Wipe or dry your pet's feet, legs and stomach when they come in out of the sleet, snow or ice;
- Never leave your pet in a closed car in the winter. Cold temperatures can quickly create a freezer-like environment in a car, putting your pet at risk of hypothermia and frostbite;
- Make sure your companion animal has a warm place to sleep with a blanket or pillow, away from drafts; and
- Check your car. Outdoor and feral cats seek shelter from the cold under car hoods, in wheel wells and underneath cars. Knock on the hood and honk the horn to remove any cats nestled in these areas.

If you're looking for a dog or cat to keep warm in your home, contact the Animal Services Facility at (301) 780-7200 or visit www.princegeorgespets4us.com.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Jeffrey M. DeHan
DoE Associate Director

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First Class Honors

County recognizes inaugural graduating class of the Urban Watershed Contractor Training Course

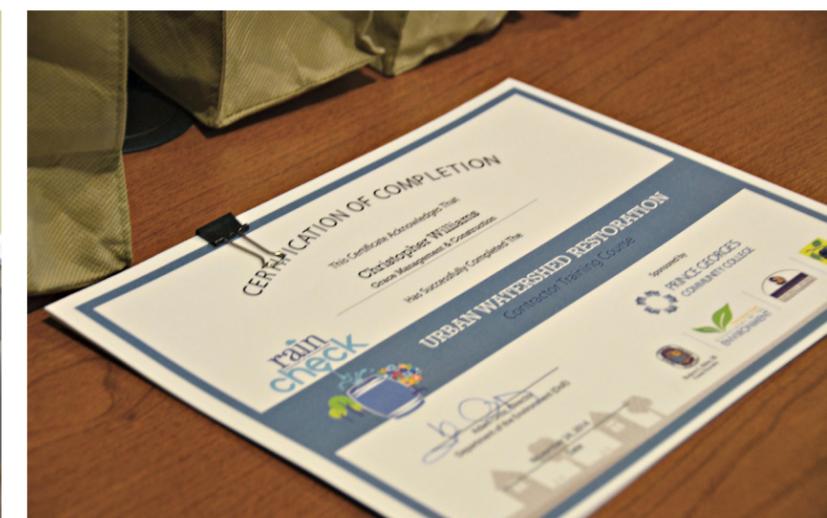
The first graduates of the Urban Watershed Contractor Training Course were recently honored during a special ceremony held at the Prince George's County Department of the Environment (DoE) headquarters in Largo. Students enrolled in the inaugural course included contractors, landscapers, engineers and entrepreneurs seeking to expand their knowledge of the design, construction, maintenance and permitting requirements of stormwater best management practices (BMPs) utilized in the County's Rain Check Rebate Program.

DoE, in partnership with the Prince George's County Office of Central Services Supplier Development and Diversity Division, Prince George's Community College, the Low Impact Development Center and the University of Maryland's Environmental Finance Center sponsored the course, which is the first-of-its-kind offering stormwater BMP education and guidance on business growth and contract procurement within the County's Clean Water Partnership. Through this course students acquired key skills and tools that strengthened their ability to successfully compete for stormwater management business within the County.

Graduates of the first Urban Watershed Contractor Training Course include:

- **Ruth Davila**, President/CEO, CelSue Construction Services, Incorporated
- **Altan Erginkoc**, Engineer, Department of the Environment
- **Crystal Faison**, President/CEO, Shepherd Design & Construction, LLC
- **Gary Faulkner**, President/CEO, Faulkner Landscaping Company
- **Eric Jackson**, Engineer, Department of the Environment
- **Ernest Jennels**, President/CEO, EDEN Team, LLC
- **Kimberly Knox**, Consultant
- **Kemba Saibou**, Environmental Planner, Department of the Environment
- **Christopher Williams**, Principle, Grace Management and Construction, LLC

The next Urban Watershed Contractor Training Course is scheduled to begin on February 3, 2015. For more information or to register, contact Prince George's Community College at 301-336-6000 or [click here](#).



SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES

Dawn Hawkins-Nixon
DoE Acting Associate Director

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Largo, Maryland 20774

Brrr...It's Freezing Outside

The weather outside is frightful but DoE work is so delightful

Despite temperatures hovering around the freezing degree mark, the Prince George's County Department of the Environment (DoE) participated in the Suitland/Temple Hills Festival, which is held in conjunction with the Branch Avenue in Bloom and Suitland Civic Association's Farmers Market at Iverson Mall.

Diane Pringle (DoE Stormwater Management Division) and Debbie Weller (DoE Sustainability Initiatives Division) hosted an information table that included the interactive EnviroScape® Watershed – a visual and hands-on model of an urban watershed that illustrates the varied sources of water pollution and best management practices for preventing our local waterways from becoming filled with trash, debris and other forms of pollution. DoE also provided festival attendees with information on environmental programs and activities available through the County.

The festival also included free give-a-ways, live music and a performance by the Iverson Mall Walkers, and craft, jewelry and vegetable vendors. For more information about the festival, visit www.branchavenueinbloom.org.



Plastics are FOREVER

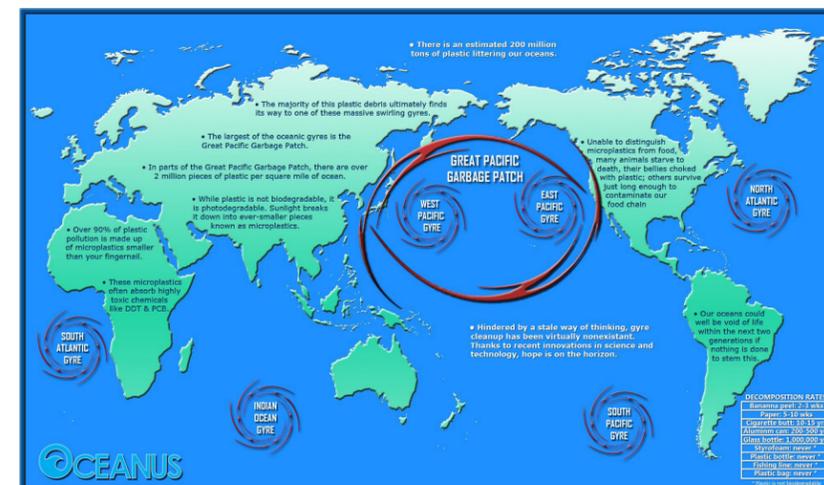
How long does it take plastic to degrade? Five years? Ten years? One hundred years? This is actually a trick question. According to scientists who have studied the degradation of plastic, this very durable material cannot be broken down by natural processes. That means, except for what is recycled, plastic waste remains with us. Where does it go? Some is thrown away and landfilled, but large amounts of plastic waste generated on land flow into local waterways through storm drains and become part of the 20,000 tons of plastic waste entering the Anacostia River on an annual basis.

Once plastics enter our streams and rivers, it eventually travels into the Earth's oceans. Sunlight and wave action make the plastic brittle, breaking into smaller pieces. Persistent organic pollutants (POPs) stick to the plastic particles forming a dense "plastic soup" that harms the marine ecosystem. Pollutants collect in ocean gyres—massive, slow rotating whirlpools—which contain plastics, trash and other harmful waste. There are five major oceanic gyres worldwide, with several smaller gyres in Alaska and Antarctica. The North Pacific Gyre, also known as the Pacific Gyre garbage patch is the largest and is approximately twice the size of the United States.

Closer to home, Trash Free Maryland (www.trashfreemaryland.org) and the Five Gyres organization (www.5gyres.org) conducted a trawl of the Chesapeake Bay to better understand plastic pollution that is plaguing the Bay. During the trawl, water samples were collected for analysis and testing. A report of the results will be available in the coming months. You may also read more about the trawl by visiting Trash Free Maryland's website.

What can you do to keep plastics and trash out of the Bay? Here are some ideas you can practice on a daily basis and community-based events that can help reduce pollution:

- Use a refillable water bottle instead of purchasing bottled water;
- Use compostable forks, spoons and knives if flatware is unavailable;
- Invite the Prince George's County Department of the Environment (DoE) to your next event or meeting, and learn more about trash prevention. For more information, contact Deborah Weller at dmweller1@co.pg.md.us or (301) 883-7161;
- Organize a volunteer community or stream cleanup. DoE provides assistance coordinating a cleanup event as well as materials including trash bags and gloves. For more information, contact DoE at (301) 883-5810; and
- Stencil storm drain inlets in your community to remind residents not to dump. The County's Storm Drain Stenciling Program promotes the protection of local waterways and provides a visual reminder that inlets drain to the Chesapeake Bay. To coordinate a stenciling project in your neighborhood, contact DoE at (301) 883-5810.



The five major gyres in the world where trash can collect.



Trash and plastic - It never goes away.

Roger E. Merritt, Jr.
DoE Associate Director

3500 Brown Station Road
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20774

Recycling Over Flow

Prince George's County to display student's environmental sculpture

New artwork is on display at the Department of the Environment's Materials Recycling Facility in Capitol Heights. The unique sculpture created by Summer Judd, a student at Northwestern High School in Hyattsville, received runner-up honors in the People's Choice Award category of the Maryland Department of the Environment's (MDE) "Rethink Recycling" Sculpture Contest. Summer used an old toilet bowl, paint, paper and plastic straws to create her sculpture entitled "Over Flow."

MDE hosts the "Rethink Recycling" Sculpture Contest in recognition of America Recycles Day—a national event uniting business, environmental and civic groups, and local, State,

and Federal government agencies to promote recycling, source reduction and the purchase of products made from recycled materials as a means to a more sustainable society.

Maryland high school students participate in the annual contest submitting innovative works of art, illustrating how reusing and recycling materials can help reduce waste. Entries include a wide assortment of materials such as paper, furniture and musical instruments used to create sculptures depicting animals, insects, abstract art and fashion dresses.

Congratulations Summer! DoE applauds your outstanding accomplishment.



AIR SPACE

Three cheers for the Waste Management Division's Disposal and Landfill Construction Crews! Their ingenuity is taking full advantage of one of the Brown Station Road Sanitary Landfill's most valuable resources—its airspace. Their latest work: unearthing and harnessing efficiencies inherent to the Landfill's active side slopes, and positively impacting the Landfill's intake capacity, and ultimately, its bottom line.

Under the guidance of Vernard Jones, Crew Supervisor II, the members of these talented crews used excavators to effectively and efficiently remove soil from the active side slopes in a way that maximized air space for the disposal of new municipal solid waste (MSW) and for the soil to be recycled for use as daily cover (a layer of compressed earth placed on top of deposited waste at the end of each working day). This innovative, environmentally conscious technique is yielding noticeable benefits for the Landfill and Prince George's County. To date, more than 75,000 tons of new MSW have been placed in the retooled side slopes generating over \$4,425,000 in landfill revenue*.

*Based on \$59 per ton tipping fee.



He's brought his love of building aquariums to the Department of the Environment and a little piece of the sea into the Department's headquarters in Largo. Steven Coyle, a Construction Standards Inspector for DoE, recently completed the design and construction of a 55 gallon freshwater aquarium featuring live aquatic plants and a variety of unique fish from around the world.

"It all started with my father. As a kid he gave me my first fish tank. It was really basic—it included plastic plants, castles, treasure chests and typical items seen in run-of-the-mill tanks. But, as my interest in the hobby grew, I began to learn more about planted aquariums and applied the technique to my own aquariums. I conducted research on different species of fish, natural habitats, diseases and treatments and aquatic plants. I read anything that could help me create a healthy and beautiful tank. No more plastic castles and treasure chests!" said Steven.

Included in the DoE fish tank are a variety of plants and unique fish from around the world. Beautiful Congo Tetras that originate from the Zaire River basin in Central Africa and Gold Neon Tetras, which inhabit the Paraguay River basin in South America. A Siamese Algae Eater from the streams and tributaries of Malaysia and Western Thailand is widely regarded as one of the best algae eaters for aquariums. It's also referred to as a "freshwater shark" due to the ray shaped fin which often stands up and resembles a shark's fin. The Peppered Cory Catfish, native to the Amazon River basin in South America, remove leftover food and decaying organic plant matter from the fish tank floor. The Oto Catfish, which also hails from the Amazon River basin are famous for their algae eating abilities and are workhorses when it comes to cleaning the tank. Pond snails can be seen in the tank eating algae and scavenging the bottom for uneaten food and decaying plant matter. The snails also burrow through the gravel, which helps to oxidize the plant roots. The fish are fed a high quality tropical pellet food twice a week.

The tank's lights mimic natural daylight to facilitate photosynthesis. The tank floor is comprised of specially formulated aquarium gravel, which is loaded with nutrients needed to help the plants grow. Stephen also provides the tank with a daily carbon treatment.



Old Man Winter & Your Rain Barrel

Tips on how to winterize your rain barrel

As freezing temperatures settle in for the winter, taking the following measures to winterize your rain barrel can save you the hassle (and expense) of replacing parts or even the barrel once the cold months have passed.

- Disconnect your rain barrel from the feeder gutter downspout. Connect a temporary downspout extension to the feeder gutter and position it to direct rain water away from the house, building or other structures.
- Use or drain any water in the barrel. Water left in the unit could freeze and crack the barrel.
- Open the barrel spigot to avoid hardware damage and be sure to remove hoses attached to the barrel.
- Remove any debris in the barrel and the barrel's filter screen. This is also a good opportunity to clean out "muck" that may have accumulated inside the barrel to help prevent the growth of mold and fungus.
- If possible, store your barrel indoors in a garage or basement during the winter months. Barrels stored outdoors should be covered with a tarp or turned upside down to prevent water accumulation. Barrels should be fully drained before attempting to move.

Don't have a rain barrel but interested in learning more about them? Contact the Chesapeake Bay Trust to get information on the Rain Check Rebate Program, which offers incentives to homeowners, businesses and others to install rain barrels and other environmental practices that help improve the County's water quality. Contact the Trust at (410) 974-2941 or visit www.cbtrust.org.

GREEN BULLETIN

ANIMAL SERVICES FACILITY | DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
3750 Brown Station Road | Upper Marlboro | (301) 780-7201

Staff Favorites ADOPTION EVENT

Don't spend your Valentine's Day alone!
Visit the Prince George's County animal shelter to see the dogs that have been hit with Cupid's bow and selected as "staff favorites."

Throughout the month of February, adoptions fees for these select dogs have been reduced to \$125*. Give a dog a loving home and receive a lifetime of unconditional love.

FEBRUARY 1-28 2015

*Fee covers adoption spay/neuter surgery (if necessary), post-surgery pain medication and e-collar.

Animal Management Division

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
WASTE MANAGEMENT DIVISION

e-cycling electronics recycling

RAIN OR SHINE

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 28

Bladensburg High School
4200 57th Avenue
Bladensburg, Maryland 20710
8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

SATURDAY MARCH 7

Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School
4545 Amundale Road
Beltsville, Maryland 20705
8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

FREE AND OPEN TO ALL PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY RESIDENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT COUNTY CLICK 3-1-1

** MAXIMUM OF FIVE (5) MONITORS AND TELEVISIONS PER RESIDENT.

RECYCLE YOUR OLD TELEVISION AND COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

Source Reduction Tip: Reduce paper usage by printing on both sides.

URBAN WATERSHED RESTORATION Contractor Training Course

What you need to know!

New This Spring!

Prince George's County Community College is offering a 5-week noncredit Urban Watershed Restoration course to explain basic information on the maintenance of best management practices (BMPs) used for the County's Rain Check Rebate Program.

Now you can learn the Program's requirements for permits, planning, design, construction and maintenance.

The Urban Watershed Restoration course is sponsored by Prince George's Community College in partnership with the Prince George's County Department of the Environment and Low Impact Development Center. The program is endorsed by the Chesapeake Landscape Council.

COURSE TOPICS INCLUDE:
Construction, Operations and Maintenance of:

- ▶ Low impact development
- ▶ Bioretention basics
- ▶ Permeable pavers
- ▶ Cisterns
- ▶ Rain barrels
- ▶ Pavement removal
- ▶ Green roofs
- ▶ Tree canopy
- ▶ Prince George's County Procurement
- ▶ Business Development
- ▶ County-based Business Program

For more information or to register, contact Prince George's Community College at 301-336-6000 or visit http://www.pgcc.edu/Programs_and_Courses/course_detail.aspx?courseID=6442468826&programID=6442462358

COURSE RUNS FEBRUARY 3, 2015 THROUGH MARCH 10, 2015

**NEW YEAR!
NEW YOU!**

The New Year marks a new start. New Year's resolutions top many to-do lists during the holiday season, and new goals and accomplishments are thought of by many who use the beginning of a new year to revitalize themselves and take advantage of all the possibilities it brings.

Setting career-related New Year's resolutions can help you move your career in a better direction and achieve success. Here are some ideas to try that may assist you in improving or growing in your career.

1. Master the Basics

Performing your job in a professional and competent manner is the keystone to career success. Excelling in your job will help you become more valuable to your organization which, in turn, will help you win top assignments, promotions and salary increases.

2. Work Faster and Smarter

Time management skills are essential in any profession. It is important to stay organized in a work environment fraught with rising workloads and competing priorities.

3. Track Your Accomplishments

In today's competitive workplace, sometimes you need to toot your own horn – in a subtle and tasteful way - to get ahead. Tracking your professional accomplishments is one way to broadcast your value to those who can assist in shaping your career. Keeping a log or portfolio of your achievements can help document your value to your employer and serve as a handy resource for interviews, resumes, salary negotiations and performance reviews.

4. Polish Your Writing Skills

Strong writing skills are essential in most jobs. Poor writing skills can undermine your credibility and your chances for advancement.

5. Avoid Workplace Mistakes

Nothing can derail your career faster than a major workplace blunder. Workplace mistakes can cost you your job, damage your professional reputation and hinder your future employment or advancement prospects.

6. Remain Versatile

When employers downsize, increasing your versatility and widening your areas of expertise is a good way to raise your value to an employer. As you advance up the career ladder, you must continually reinvent yourself, master new skills and tackle new challenges. Seeking varied work assignments and broadening your network can help raise your value to your organization.

7. Build Connections

Building connections with peers, within and outside of your organization is critical to career success. Social networking tools, industry conferences and professional associations are a few ways to network and cultivate new relationships. It's also a good idea to look up colleagues with whom you have lost touch and reconnect with them.

8. Give yourself credit and a pat on the back when you deserve.

If you are less likely to have frequent interaction with your boss, it is important that you recognize yourself for excellent efforts. One way to do this is to keep a file of positive notes, thank you letters and reminders of successful ventures.

9. Strive to learn something new every single day.

It is easy to get bogged down in the same old routine. The opportunities for learning are multiplying every day in this information age. Reading an article, discussing a new approach with a colleague or going online to research what other organizations are doing are great ways to stay abreast of new best practices in your industry.

10. Maintain a Healthy Work-Life Balance

Long hours, unpredictable schedules and competing priorities can wreak havoc on your personal and professional life. To avoid career burnout, it is important to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Consider how you might achieve a better balance.

HR
matters