

*Prince George's County*

DEPARTMENT OF THE  
ENVIRONMENT



march/april 2015

*Green Scene*  
newsletter



Rushern L. Baker, III  
County Executive

# DIRECTOR'S CORNER

1  
from the director



## Dear Neighbor,

Here in the D.C. region, springtime is where it is at. Florida has a lock on the winter, New England has the fall, but here, spring is king. That may be due to cherry blossoms, tourist season or our own local desire to enjoy the "sweet spot" of weather after winter but before the famous humidity of our summer begins.

However, there is another great reason to love spring. It is when we get our hands dirty again. It is time to pull, plant, clean up and clean out. The colors and vibrancy of our native environment return in a time of renewal, and we pitch in to help.

With many of you, we have been planting trees, cleaning trash and litter, and new restoration projects are underway. As you and your communities get your spring thing going, think about us in DoE and if we can help in any way. We are happy to provide dumpsters, gloves and volunteers to help cleanups. We can help pay for trees or rain gardens at your home or local park. We can help you get a rain barrel to water your landscaping or garden. We also work together providing compost, recycling, animal services and many other efforts. These little partnerships together help make Prince George's clean, green, healthy and beautiful.

In these pages you will see many efforts for renewal in our initiatives. So, please enjoy and don't hesitate to engage as we together get our hands dirty this spring.

## Best regards,

*Adam Ortiz*  
Director

### 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](http://environment.mypgc.us)



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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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# WHITE HOUSE AND EPA RECOGNIZE COUNTY'S STORMWATER RETROFIT PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (P3) AMONG MOST INNOVATIVE IN THE NATION



Recently, Prince George's County and Corvias Solutions announced the launch of the nation's first collaboration for a stormwater infrastructure management public-private partnership (P3) initiative called the Clean Water Partnership (CWP). The community-based project will support local job creation, minority business hiring and boost long-term economic growth, and provide career training and mentoring while linking private businesses and companies in meeting the challenges of large scale green urban infrastructure retrofits.

"In order to comply with the Federal Clean Water Act to reduce stormwater runoff pollution, Prince George's County implemented an innovative public-private partnership that will improve our environment and our quality of life, as well as create jobs and a new industry for our small and minority business community," said Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "The Prince George's County Department of the Environment and Corvias Solutions developed a robust program that has been recognized and lauded by the business community, faith organizations, environmental organizations, and

even The White House. In Prince George's County we rise and respond to our obligations and our challenges with smart and practical solutions – this initiative exemplifies our drive to not just follow best practices, but to create best practices."

The White House has commended the County for its leadership and recognized the Partnership as a best practice for other communities to follow. "With this first-of-its-kind public-private partnership for green stormwater infrastructure, Prince George's County is leading the way for communities across the country. The new Clean Water Partnership supports the goals of the President's Build America Investment Initiative by uniting the public and private sectors to invest in a 21st century American infrastructure," said Christy Goldfuss, Managing Director of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. "This innovative approach to managing stormwater has potential to revitalize communities, develop small business and create jobs."

The CWP aligns with President Obama's Build America Investment Initiative to increase infrastructure investment and promote economic growth by creating opportunities for State and local governments and the private sector to collaborate

and expand public-private partnerships. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has also recognized the County's unique approach of leveraging a dedicated funding stream for green infrastructure stormwater runoff projects to meet its obligations under the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), a comprehensive "pollution diet" that requires significant reductions in nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment.

According to the EPA, approximately \$635 billion is required to finance improvements for aging water-related infrastructure needs throughout the nation. These funds have traditionally been provided by local government funds or stormwater utilities often included on tax bills and the EPA through its various loan sources.

"The Prince George's County public-private partnership is a great example of the type of activity that EPA's Water Infrastructure and Resiliency Finance Center hopes to encourage," says EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. "By providing innovative financing support for sustainable and resilient water infrastructure, this collaboration will help the community improve their drinking water, wastewater and stormwater systems." The Water Finance Center is part of the President's Build America Investment Initiative.

In the 1990s, the County pioneered the use of rain gardens, which are now considered mainstream and used around the world as a stormwater management best practice. Through the CWP, the County and Corvias (a national leader in P3 infrastructure projects) will work jointly to install rain gardens and other stormwater filter devices such as bioswales, green roofs, rain barrels and permeable pavement to treat up to 15,000 acres of existing impervious surfaces over the course of the next decade.

Receiving unanimous support from the County Council, the Partnership will help the County continue to make significant progress in creating clean and healthy communities that positively contribute to overall well-being of the environment. "The program underscores

the resourcefulness of County Government and the Council is particularly pleased with the priority that the program places on the utilization of local and local minority businesses," commented Council Chair Mel Franklin. "We are leveraging the efficiency of the private sector and connecting that with the knowledge of County employees, businesses and industry experts to complete a monumental task."

"It's a race against the clock that we are equipped to win," says Adam Ortiz, Director of the Department of the Environment. "The County is unleashing the efficiencies of the private sector for the public good to the Partnership and is dedicating tremendous resources that will result in a state-of-the-art stormwater management center and serve as the benchmark for other Counties, States and Countries trying to accomplish the same."

During the first phase of the Partnership, the County will invest \$100 million in the initial retrofit phase of 2,000 acres with Corvias to manage the design, construction and long-term maintenance of County property. The benefits of the Partnership will result in a significant cost savings with this long-term project.

"No other stormwater partnership or project has committed to address both the immediate and long-term requirements for sustainable and resilient stormwater infrastructure, which includes the long-term maintenance of all retrofitted improvements," said Greg Cannito, Managing Director for Corvias Solutions. "We absolutely think this is a national game-changer and applaud Prince George's County for taking a lead on this innovative P3."

Roland L. Jones, Director of the County's Office of Central Services adds that this business model will stimulate and expand the County's tax base and increase mentor-protégé networks that will enhance skill levels and participation in the CWP. "This Partnership will provide local, small and minority-businesses the opportunity to compete and secure contracts to help build water infrastructure systems," says Jones. "Through the stormwater management workforce training and minority business development program, the CWP will help

create long-term career opportunities in landscaping, construction, engineering and technology."

The educational component of the Partnership includes the Urban Watershed Restoration Contractor Training Course, which is offered at Prince George's Community College and taught by instructors from the Low Impact Development Center. The Course provides instruction on the construction, operation and maintenance of stormwater management practices, and will assist in developing a robust workforce to advance the County's stormwater infrastructure.

The Department of the Environment is the lead agency charged with managing the County's Partnership projects and ensuring that the program goals are accomplished in a cost-effective and timely manner.

For more information about this program or to find out how to get involved in workforce and minority business training and job opportunities, please contact the Prince George's County's Supplier Development and Diversity Division (SDDD) at (301) 883-6488.



# RAIN CHECK REBATE

*See How it Works!*

The Palmer Building located in Southern Hyattsville (also known as "SoHy") dates back to 1912. The Palmer Ford car dealership once sold the classic Model T in this historic building, which recently underwent major renovations. Three glass garage bay doors were installed, dropped ceilings were removed to open the space and increase the amount of natural light entering the building, and 800 square feet of permeable pavement was added along one side of the building to reduce pollution from stormwater runoff.

Nestled in SoHy on the corner of Gallatin Street and Church Place, The Palmer Building is now home to Vigilante Coffee - a large scale roaster and café, an accounting firm and interior design company. During the renovations, The Palmer Building's owner Daniel Simon noticed that in addition to the interior, the streets surrounding his building could use some sprucing up as well.

First, two native shade trees were planted on the Hyattsville Post Office property, which sits across the street from The Palmer Building. "The County's Rain Check Rebate Program was instrumental in helping to get those planted. The Program was also utilized to support the construction and installation of the permeable pavement," said Daniel.

Daniel worked with a County-based architecture firm MM&R to create a simple, functional and esthetically pleasing design that improved the filtration of stormwater runoff and increased parking on Church Place. Daniel also worked with permeable paver manufacturer Ernest Maier located in Bladensburg and Capitol Hardscapes, a construction company in Bethesda to complete the installation of the pavers. "The installation of the permeable pavement has drastically reduced the amount of debris and polluted water flowing into the storm drain on Church Place. I'm very proud of what has been accomplished in this space with the assistance of the County and local businesses. It's my hope to expand this and other environmentally-friendly practices to other areas in SoHy and throughout the County," commented Daniel.

The Prince George's County Department of the Environment partners with the Chesapeake Bay Trust to offer monetary incentives to County homeowners and businesses to install various stormwater management practices that improve the quality and reduce the quantity of stormwater while reducing pollution to local streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. The Rain Check Rebate Program provides up to \$4,000 for single-family residential projects and up to \$20,000 for multi-family dwellings, commercial, nonprofit organizations, homeowner, condominium and civic association projects.

For more information about the Rain Check Rebate Program, contact Natalia Sanchez, Program Coordinator for the Chesapeake Bay Trust, at [nsanchez@cbtrust.org](mailto:nsanchez@cbtrust.org) or (410) 974-2941 extension 114.



## SHELTER PET HELPS ARMY VETERAN OVERCOME WAR WOUNDS

Star came from a military family and felt called to serve. But when the Iraq war veteran found herself gripped with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other trauma, it was an adopted companion dog - aptly named Lucky - who helped her cope with the wounds of war.

" I never got back to being  
**MYSELF**"

Star grew up as a military brat.

"My entire family is military. It's all I've known my entire life," she explains.

Enlisting in the Army right after high school and ROTC seem like the right choice. Yet Star found the experience to be overwhelming and was discharged just a few months later.

"It was maybe too soon. It was too much for me to handle," she says. "I couldn't deal with it."

Many different jobs followed. Star was a teacher, bank teller, waitress and bartender, but did not find satisfaction in any of those roles. In spite of her earlier experience, the desire to serve in the armed forces was unrelenting.

About five years later, Star fulfilled her dreams. She re-enlisted, completed basic training at Fort Jackson and was sent to her first duty station at Fort Drum in New York.

Although Star was originally trained as a financial management specialist, she decided to change her Military Occupation Specialty (MOS); she wanted to be a combat medic. She was deployed to Iraq after receiving her training at both Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas and Fort Irwin in California.

"It was my first deployment," she recalls. "I was scared. I didn't know what to do."

(continued on the next page)



Still, the Army veteran considers herself fortunate.

"I went on lots of missions that required convoys," Star says. "We were only hit three times with IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices), which was pretty good. We were pretty lucky."

However, Star did not leave the war zone unscathed.

"Some instances caused me to go into a shell. I wasn't able to come back from what was happening," she says.

The combat medic sought out available assistance, but did not find it to be very helpful. "I had to talk to a therapist in Iraq. The therapist was part of my unit, and it was supposed to be confidential, but it was not," she says. "Everyone wound up knowing my business and what was going on."

Things got progressively worse from there, but Star knew she had to keep herself together for the remainder of her deployment. She never felt completely normal and even though she knew something was wrong, she did not believe anything could help her.

There came a time, however, when Star knew she could no longer avoid seeking help.

After transferring to Hawaii for a few years, and then to Fort Benning, Georgia, Star was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. In addition she suffered with severe anxiety - a symptom of her Post Traumatic Stress Disorder - and back pain from an injury she incurred during deployment that never healed correctly.

"I didn't want to get out, but because I had so many issues," she says, "[but] I didn't have a choice. They said, 'It's not benefiting you or the Army for you to stay in.'"

In 2013 after serving for nearly 10 years, Star was medically retired from the Army.

Star longed for any respite from her anxiety and claustrophobia, and eventually decided that a companion pet might help her.

"I wanted to feel comfortable at home when I am by myself," she says.

In many ways Stars' healing began when she gave a second chance to a then four year-old black Lab mix in the care of Prince George's County Animal Services Facility. The shelter partners with Pets for Patriots to help veterans adopt the most overlooked companion animals and waives pet adoption fees for veterans approved into the program.

"Lucky was in a corner cage," Star remembers. "He came up and sat. He immediately put his paw out. He came out of the cage and sat with us. It just clicked. It was instantaneous; I didn't have to think."

The very next day, Star and her family brought Lucky home.

NO PLACE LIKE  
**HOME**

Lucky took his place as a member of the family easily.

"He just fit in," says Star. "He was not scared to come to us or interact. She said, 'Hey, I'm here. I'm yours. Come get me.'"

The big dog's mellow demeanor led Star to believe that he could handle her issues as well as a house full of kids.

"There was no question in my mind that he was the dog we needed," Star says with confidence. "And he was really cute, too."

Now when Star feels depressed, Lucky lays under her feet until she feels better and can get up. "He keeps me calm," she says. "He keeps me from feeling anxious. If I call, he's right there. He meets me at the door when I go out. When I feel like there's no hope, he helps me to feel better, not down."

Although Lucky is helping Star overcome her war wounds, she recognizes that healing takes time. As she begins to see the positive changes in her life and those of her children, she's feeling more and more at peace.

"Slowly but surely I am becoming more comfortable, less threatened by the outside environment," she shares, "but it is still a work in progress. I am more comfortable when in the house, not anxious and scared when alone. When he's with me I don't feel like there's a threat."

Lucky's calming presence is not felt by Star alone, but by the whole household. He can tell when one of the children is upset, and will approach them, nudging with his nose.

"He's been positive for us," says the Army veteran.

HOPE  
& **GRATITUDE**

Star describes her experience with Pets for Patriots as nothing short of "awesome." Pets for Patriots was quick to answer emails, return phone calls and provided her with a lot of information - especially during a brief period when she was less convinced that Lucky was the perfect fit.

"I would definitely recommend them," she says. "They are very professional. [They] care about pets and you too."

The Army veteran believes that Lucky and Pets for Patriots helped her regain her family life, her social life and even her sanity.

"I don't know where I would be or what I would be doing without them," Star says. "I will always remember what they did for me. I can't thank them enough."

Above all, adopting Lucky has given Star something that has eluded her for far too long: hope.

"I have a friend to feel safe with," she says, "[but] the biggest thing of all - I have my hope back."

Are you or do you know a veteran who would benefit from a companion pet? To learn more about the Pets for Patriots® program, click [here](#).



Star was researching various programs online when she discovered Pets for Patriots, a nationally operating charity that helps veterans adopt companion dogs and cats. She read the testimonials and stories of veterans who had adopted through the program, and liked how Pets for Patriots did not push itself on people.

"[They are] not concerned with getting their name out there [or] popularity," she says, which for her made the organization "the obvious choice."

Like many veterans who adopt their pets through Pets for Patriots, Star was determined to find a shelter pet, not an animal from a backyard breeder or puppy mill. It upsets her that many people have negative associations with shelter animals despite the fact that pets find themselves homeless through no fault of their own.

"I look at them just like us," she says. "They've gone through stuff like us; they should be given a chance just like us."

Jeffrey M. DeHan  
DoE Associate Director

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### CWA Fee Reduction

By installing a Rain Check Rebate Program practice on your property you are also eligible for a fee reduction credit on the Clean Water Act Fee located on your tax bill. To obtain a Fee Reduction Request Form, click [here](#) or contact CountyClick 3-1-1.



# RAIN CHECK REVISITED

## OUR NEW REBATES MAKE FOR BIG SAVINGS

In 2014, the Rain Check Rebate Program, which provides County property owners rebates for installing approved stormwater management practices, provided 67 property owners with a total of \$28,004 in rebates. That's a rebate of \$417.97 per property owner!

Recently, the Rain Check Rebate Program increased the lifetime maximum rebate amount available to property owners from \$2,000 to \$4,000 for residential properties. By installing pollution prevention practices, property owners are able to manage stormwater runoff on their property, minimize runoff and prevent pollutants from entering local streams.

## CLEAN WATER: Be a Part of the Solution

Have you thought about installing a rain garden in your yard or planting trees on your property? If the only thing stopping you is the price, consider looking to your local government for monetary support. A growing number of Counties are encouraging residents to install stormwater management practices on their properties and offering assistance, resources and even reimbursements to offset the expense.

"Stormwater management practices are a cost-effective and worthwhile way to reduce stormwater runoff," explains Paul DeSousa, a Planner with the Prince George's County Department of the Environment. "Offering reimbursements is a great way to reward the efforts property owners are making to assist the County in reducing stormwater impacts."

By encouraging people in the County to better control stormwater through the Rain Check Rebate Program, Prince George's County can meet its goal to reduce stormwater runoff coming from impervious surface areas and improve the quality of the County's streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.

With more money available in rebates, why not choose one of the seven types of stormwater management practices available to you?

To learn more about the Prince George's County's Rain Check Rebate Program, click [here](#).

## MINIMUM PROJECT SIZE & MAXIMUM REBATE PER PROPERTY

PROJECT TYPE	INDIVIDUAL RESIDENCE		COMMERCIAL, HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATIONS, CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATIONS, CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS, MULTI-FAMILY DWELLING, NON PROFITS, NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS	
	Minimum Size	Maximum Rebate Amount per Unit	Minimum Size	Maximum Rebate Amount per Unit
Rain Barrel	50 gallons	\$2 per gallon stored	100 gallons	\$2 per gallon stored
Cistern	250 gallons	\$2 per gallon stored	250 gallons	\$2 per gallon stored
Rain Garden	100 square feet	\$10 per square foot	100 square feet	\$10 per square foot
Urban Tree Canopy	Minimum tree height of 5 feet	\$150 per tree	Minimum tree height of 5 feet	\$150 per tree
Pavement Removal	None	\$6 per square foot	400 square feet	\$6 per square foot
Permeable Pavement	None	\$12 per square foot	400 square feet	\$12 per square foot
Green Roof	1/4 total roof area	\$10 per square foot	1/4 total roof area	\$10 per square foot if less than 6 inches of planting material \$20 per square foot if over 6 inches of planting material
Maximum Rebate Allowed per Property	\$4,000		\$20,000	

## SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES

**Dawn Hawkins-Nixon**  
DoE Acting Associate Director

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Suite 500  
Largo, Maryland 20774

# THE BENEFITS OF A SCHOOL GARDEN

Imagine a student planting a seed in a school garden and days later seeing a tiny leaf push through the soil. Tending to new plants teaches children responsibility and teamwork. It provides an opportunity to bring science, math, social studies, language and visual arts to life through hands-on learning. Vegetable gardens let children taste the wonders of fresh food. Plus, parents, students and teachers can all enjoy the feeling of community that comes from sharing a new adventure. Here are just some of the many benefits of adding a garden to your school.

### THE EXPERIENCE

Seeing the soil, water and sun come together to transform tiny seeds into plants is a great lesson in itself. Growing a garden to appreciate the wonder and power of nature is at the core of environmental education. Planting seeds teaches students about protecting natural resources, keeping soil healthy and sources of water clean. Children also learn that open land can be used for growing food, planting trees and enjoying nature.

### RESPONSIBILITY & TEAMWORK

The fundamental rule of farming is that it takes responsibility and teamwork. Children learn how to be responsible by taking care of planted seeds and weeding the garden to help fruits and vegetables grow. Gardens also provide a wealth of opportunities for teamwork. By working together to tend to the ongoing needs of the garden, build their students' self-esteem and get to see first hand the fruits of their labor.

### HANDS-ON LEARNING

Gardens on a school campus can be a source of fun and education. Students can get their hands dirty while learning about healthy foods and nutrition, nature and agriculture and respecting the environment.

School gardens can take a variety of forms, from simple containers outside a classroom to a multi-plot to an in-ground garden featuring seating areas and a greenhouse. But, the size of your garden should not limit its potential to contribute to the learning environment. The benefits are readily available to all, so let's go and plant those seeds!



Roger E. Merritt, Jr.  
DoE Associate Director

3500 Brown Station Road  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20774

## MULCH MADNESS!

*County sponsors free mulch give-a-way, source reduction event*

Christmas trees collected through the Prince George's County holiday tree recycling program definitely did not go to waste. They were recycled into 900 cubic yards of mulch that was available on a load-your-own-while-it-lasts basis during the County's annual Mulch Madness Source Reduction Event.

Sponsored by the Department of the Environment's Waste Management Division, the annual Mulch Madness event is the gift that keeps on giving. During this year's event, which was held at the Yard Waste Composting Facility in Upper Marlboro, 750 cubic yards of free mulch was distributed to more than 800 extremely happy County residents, citizens and employees who participated in the source reduction event.

Mulch is still available for purchase in bulk quantities—five (5) cubic yards for \$10—at the Composting Facility. Bulk mulch purchases can be made Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. and require a pick-up truck for hauling and pickup. A front-end loader is available for loading assistance.

Before the event, DoE visited the Composting Facility and got a first-hand look at the collected trees being grinded into mulch. View this DoE [video](#), which highlights the process that includes putting hundreds of whole Christmas trees into a grinder, which then converts them into mulch.

For more information, contact CountyClick at 3-1-1.



Learn to reduce water usage, prevent soil erosion and reduce the use of herbicides in your home gardens by applying mulch.

# FAITH & THE ENVIRONMENT

This spring, inspire your faith community to become better stewards of the environment by attending the free Stewardship of Creation: Caring for Our Sacred Waters workshops being held throughout Prince George's County.

Beginning in April, Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake will offer several workshops that provide an opportunity for religious communities to learn about what causes pollution in waterways surrounding the region and how to prevent it; what Prince George's County is doing to address the issue of water pollution through its Alternative Compliance Program and how your congregation can get involved; and, how people of all faiths can connect to nature through the Sacred Grounds™ certification program.

Register to attend a workshop being offered in May or June at places of worship throughout the County:

## May 31, 2015

2 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Jerusalem African Methodist Episcopal Church

8415 Schultz Road

Clinton, MD 20735

## June 14, 2015

2 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Mishkan Torah Synagogue

10 Ridge Road

Greenbelt, MD 20770

For more information about the workshops, please contact Kolya Braun-Greiner via email at [kolya@interfaithchesapeake.org](mailto:kolya@interfaithchesapeake.org).

# GREEN BULLETIN



## FAITHFUL STEWARDS RESTORING WATERSHEDS INTERFAITH Workshops

Join us at one of our FREE Interfaith workshops on how to care for our sacred waters

### LEARN:

- What our faith tells us about being stewards of water
- Ways to improve sustainability in places of worship
- How to enroll in the Prince George's County Alternative Compliance Program
- The different programs that can help your congregation be better stewards of the environment

### WORKSHOP DATES & LOCATIONS

All workshops 2 p.m. - 5 p.m.

#### May 31

Jerusalem African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church  
8415 Schultz Road  
Clinton, MD 20735

#### June 14

Mishkan Torah Synagogue  
10 Ridge Road  
Greenbelt, MD 20770

For more information, email [kolya@interfaithchesapeake.org](mailto:kolya@interfaithchesapeake.org)



## SAVE THE DATE

MAY 19 2015



## 2015 Green Summit

Please join the Prince George's County Department of the Environment (DoE) and other sustainability leaders for our 2015 Green Summit to ENGAGE, PROMOTE and EMPOWER action for environmental initiatives and sustainability practices in our County.

This FREE one-day event will feature sessions with community, business and nonprofit leaders, to include:

- litter
- composting
- clean air & energy
- water
- urban farming
- recycling
- green businesses
- green careers

WHAT: Prince George's County 2015 Green Summit

WHEN: May 19, 2015 | 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

WHERE: Southern Regional Technology and Recreation Complex  
7007 Rock Road  
Ft. Washington, MD 20774

COST: FREE Free parking available onsite



Prince George's County is changing the way we

# RECYCLE!

We are #1 in MARYLAND for waste diversion through REDUCTION, REUSE and RECYCLING WITH YOUR HELP, WE CAN DO MORE!

PLASTIC BAGS ARE NO LONGER BEING ACCEPTED IN YOUR RECYCLING BIN OR CART

RETURN TO SENDER

# WORKING FOR A BETTER ENVIRONMENT

**T**he Department of the Environment (DoE) is launching its “Best Place to Work” initiative—a program focusing on cultivating a workplace that fosters productivity, enhances employee morale and demonstrates a commitment to the professional growth and development of DoE employees.

To help accomplish these goals, DoE has established a “Best Place to Work” team that includes DoE employees who have volunteered to meet on a regular basis to develop innovative ideas and activities that will attract new employees, retain a productive workforce and provide career advancement opportunities. In addition, the team will work to create a work environment and culture that motivates employees to perform at their best to achieve optimum results.

Currently, the “Best Place to Work” team is working to finalize the program’s vision and mission statement, as well as develop a list of short and long-term activities that could be incorporated into DoE policies and practices.

