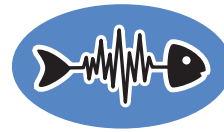


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Nashville Clean Water Project

Nashville Launches Technology-Rich Adoption Program for 44,000 Storm Drains

Citizens called to Assist Nashville's Rivers and Streams with GIS-enabled reporting system, the first in the Southeast.

(NASHVILLE, TN) — With almost 44,000 unique city locations mapped inter-actively, Nashville's Storm Drain Adoption Program launches Tuesday to connect citizens with powerful infrastructure and environmental stewardship opportunities yards from their door.

With a smart phone, laptop or desktop computer, volunteers can “adopt” location-specific storm water inlets and catch basins based on where they live, work or play, and thereby commit to protect them from debris and other clean water concerns. Nashville Clean Water Project created the program, while local technologist Greg Rhinehart engineered the accompanying GIS-enabled technology platform with help from Metro Water Services.

“The clean water cause is now as close as the end of your driveway or street, and it's never been easier to positively impact Nashville than now,” said Mark Thien, executive director of the nonprofit Nashville Clean Water Project.

Adoption are available at www.NashvilleH2o.org/adopt or via Hands on Nashville (HON.org).

Information reported by volunteers about the drains can be used by Metro and Nashville Clean Water Project to address location-specific issues such as localized flooding, illegal dumping, chronic pollution, damaged grates, erosion issues from nearby construction sites and more.

“Many storm drains in Nashville have debris and litter that shouldn't be there,” said Michael Hunt, Metro Water Service's storm water manager. “Storm drains lead directly to rivers and streams so programs that serve to remove or prevent materials from routing to our storm drains are instrumental in reducing waterway pollution and localized flooding of our streets.”

With each rainfall, plastic bottles and cups, polystyrene, and various other floatables and pollutants wash into local waterways via storm drains. Volunteers are asked to remove — to the degree it is safe to do so — what shouldn't be there and discard the light debris in their residential or commercial trash can, then report their findings via electronic link.

“The Storm Drain Adoption Program is a chance for people to make a difference right outside of their front doors,” said Lori Shinton, president and CEO of Hands On Nashville, a project

partner. “Every act of service benefits the Nashville community – whether someone can spend 10 minutes or 10 hours on a project.”

About a dozen storm drain adoption programs exist across the country, with the more technologically advanced offerings like Nashville’s located on the west coast. Memphis’ is the nearest but it does not involve GIS mapping.

The adoption program is ideal for individuals or families, as well as church groups, Scout troops, neighborhood associations and others who can look after entire streets or blocks. Hands On Nashville has invited thousands of its volunteers to participate in the program launch, while both WRLT’s Team Green Adventures and Nashville Hiking Meetup also have encouraged member participation across the city.

The program also can accommodate sponsors and partners who commit to spreading the word and advancing the cause.

“No more lake cleanups with mosquitoes and ticks,” said Carrie Russell, an adopter in the fall pilot. “I can make a difference within yards of my house now. It feels good. It’s simple.”

It’s an important program in a city with over 300 linear miles of waterway the Federal E.P.A. and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation have deemed impaired. Nashville’s explosive growth brings additional challenges to water resources as development can increase the variety and amount of pollutants carried into our waterways.

“Nashville has developed some ‘It City’ struggles but this is an ‘It City Solution,’” Thien said. “Our program is an effective means to educate the public about the issues that can jeopardize our clean water,” Thien said.

Initial funding was provided by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), the family-run Roros Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee. Local advertising agency iostudio donated a decommissioned Windows-based laptop to support programming needs in the field, while volunteer Greg Rhinehart modified industry-leading software donated by ESRI ArcGIS to create unique capabilities for the location-based analysis and contextual insights. Tennessee Environmental Council also offered support of the program’s early development.

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About Nashville Clean Water Project:

Nashville Clean Water Project works in support of clean local waterways and adjacent lands. In 2007, the nonprofit originated the largest water cleanups in Nashville’s history. They can be found online at www.NashvilleH2o.org and on Facebook and Twitter at @NashvilleH2o.

About Hands On Nashville:

Hands On Nashville (HON) works to address critical issues facing the Middle Tennessee community through volunteer-centric programming. For more information, visit HON.org or call (615) 298-1108.

Metro Water Services:

Metro Water Services (MWS) is a water, wastewater and stormwater utility serving Nashville/Davidson County. <http://www.nashville.gov/Water-Services.aspx>