

One week, two successful workshops!

Public works staff gather to discuss storm pond management issues

Fifty staff people from communities in Ramsey and Washington Counties attended the Stormwater U: Outfalls and Inventories workshop at the Stillwater Library on March 18. The workshop began with short presentations from Dale Thompson (MPCA), Louise Watson and Brad Lindaman (RWMWD), and Angie Hong (EMWREP) which emphasized the importance of storm pond maintenance for water quality and for meeting state and local permit requirements. Louise and Brad also shared success stories from the RWMWD storm pond program - joint efforts between the watershed and cities that resulted in cleaner water.

One highlight of the workshop was a panel comprised of Torry Kraftson (Stillwater), DuWayne Konewko (Maplewood) and Rod Leick (Vadnais Heights) (represented by Joel Schilling), who gave an overview of their communities' storm pond inventory programs. Another highlight were the small group roundtable discussions at the end of the morning in which people were able to swap stories, ask for advice and bring up issues in storm pond management. We hope to have a field session on storm pond inspections sometime this fall.

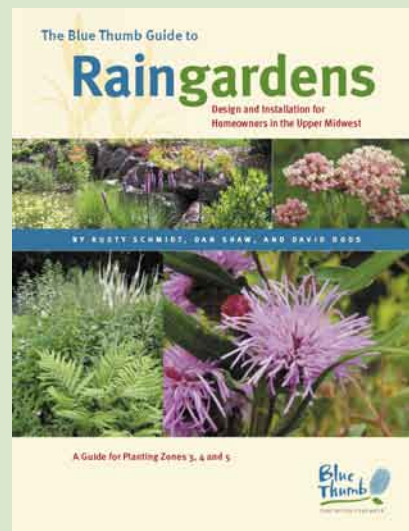
Local landscapers get a Blue Thumb

This year's landscaper workshop was as popular as ever, with 70 participants from nurseries and landscaping firms around the metro area. At the workshop, Angie Hong gave an overview of how landscaping practices affect water quality, while Dawn Pape (RCWD) gave an described the Blue Thumb program and urged attendees to become Blue Thumb partners.

The meat of the workshop were the presentations by Rusty Schmidt (WCD) and Mike Isensee (Dakota SWCD) that included step by step instructions for installing raingardens in residential settings and bioretention areas in commercial settings.

A second workshop will be held on April 2 at Thompson Park Lodge in West St. Paul. Registration is \$29 for MNLA

members and \$39 for non-members and is on-line at www.mnla.biz.



Participants at the landscaper workshops receive a copy of the Blue Thumb Guide to Raingardens.

A Special Raingarden Workshop for EMWREP members

Join us on Thursday, April 17 from 2-4pm at the Family Means Center for a special raingarden design workshop with Rusty Schmidt. As the Metro Blooms trainer, Rusty will be presenting this course for Twin Cities' homeowners 16 times during the course of this spring, including two workshops here on the east side. (Sat. April 26, 11:30am-1:30pm at the Mahtomedi District Ed Center and Sat. May 17, 10am-12pm at the St. Paul Park Community Center.) Metro Blooms workshops held in 2006 and 2007 were packed to capacity with around 100 people attending each session.

This will be a fun opportunity for those of you who would like to know more about raingarden design and a good way to prepare yourself for the questions you might get from community members as raingardens become more and more popular in the area. If you are planning on coming, please send me an e-mail (angie.hong@mnwcd.org) so that I can get enough snacks for everyone.

The Family Means Center is located directly behind the WCD office in Stillwater: 1875 Northwestern Ave. S.



Blue Thumb Program to sponsor billboards in April and May

The Blue Thumb group has an opportunity to sponsor 15 billboards in the Twin Cities along major highways at a special PSA rate of \$750 per billboard. These billboards will be seen by 227,540 people per day during April and May - the biggest months for garden planning. EMWREP is hoping to sponsor one or two billboards within our area. (Sample shown above will be redesigned by a professional graphic artist.)

Tuesdays in the Park - Signs of Spring Hike April 1, 6-7:30 pm at Pine Point Park

Welcome spring with a hike in the woods at Pine Point Park in Stillwater Twp. After reading a short passage from Aldo Leopold's Sand County Almanac, we'll make a 2.5 mile loop on a moderately hilly dirt trail, passing under pine plantations and past Louise and Loon Lakes. Along the way we'll listen for frogs, talk about trees and invasive plants and look for signs of spring.

Meet at the parking lot. Bring binoculars if you have them and wear "outdoor" clothes and boots as it may be snowy or muddy. Dogs are allowed on leash.

RSVP to outing leader Angie Hong (952-261-9599 or algoodri@hotmail.com). Visit www.mn.sierraclub.org/outings for the most up-to-date trip information.

Members of the East Metro Water Resource Education Program:

Brown's Creek Watershed District • City of Cottage Grove • City of Dellwood • City of Forest Lake • City of Lake Elmo • City of Stillwater • City of Willernie • Lower St. Croix Watershed Management Organization • Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization • South Washington Watershed District • Valley Branch Watershed District • Washington Conservation District • Washington County

