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PVSC installs rain-collection system at Harrison's WMS

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Over the last six years, the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) and the Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) Water Resources Program have worked with various municipalities to develop Green Infrastructure feasibility studies to identify rain-harvesting projects. Two such projects were completed this fall when PVSC and RCE completed rain collection system installations at Washington Middle School in Harrison, as well as at Langston Hughes Elementary School in East Orange.

Both rain gardens collect stormwater from rooftops that would otherwise puddle on playgrounds and eventually make it to nearby sewers, collecting trash and other forms of debris along the way.

PVSC's River Restoration Program, Line Operations Department and Pipe Shop teamed up to perform the installations.

"When rain falls on grass or other vegetation, the water is absorbed and filtered by soil and plants. However, when rain falls on asphalt or cement playgrounds, the rainwater cannot soak into the ground," PVSC Chairman Thomas Tucci Jr. said "In those cases, the rainwater must be properly managed to prevent flooding and remove pollution that the rainwater may have picked up from rooftops or paved surfaces. Together with RCE, we have worked with several communities and schools to construct rainwater harvesting systems in an effort to reduce flooding and pollution."

At Washington Middle School, a 700-square-foot rain garden was constructed in the school's courtyard to collect rooftop runoff from the school, as well as surface runoff from the existing sidewalk in the courtyard. The team also installed a 205-gallon cistern to collect rooftop runoff.

The PVSC partnered with the RCE six years ago to pilot a Green Infrastructure Outreach and Technical Assistance Program.

The program is designed to provide guidance and direction to the 48 municipalities in the PVSC service area regarding the benefits of implementing green infrastructure practices.