

First Presbyterian Church of Howard County

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Problem:

First Presbyterian Church had frequent problems with standing water in the facility's basement and throughout the property.

Solution:

Using proceeds from the Howard County Watershed Protection and Restoration program, the county retrofitted the First Presbyterian property with various green infrastructure facilities, including a conservation landscaping garden with native plants and trees, a dry creek bed leading to a rain garden, and a 5,000 square foot green roof. These features capture 13,000 gallons of water per inch of rainfall. The property is now a "living laboratory" for stormwater management, enabling the church to host forums and educational events to increase understanding about the solutions to polluted runoff.



Photo Credit: Earth Forum of Howard County

Key Project Facts

Type of Project: Bioretention

Scale: Runoff from a 24,000 sq ft roof and parking lot

Funding Sources: Howard County Tree Canopy Program; Howard County Watershed Protection and Restoration Fund; Howard County Watershed Steward Academy

Partners: Earth Forum of Howard County (HC), HC Watershed Steward Academy, HC READY Program (which provides summer employment for high school & college students), Eagle Scout troop, the HC Tree Canopy Program

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What is Polluted Runoff?

The growth of our cities has resulted in too many paved surfaces, which prevent rain water from being absorbed by the ground. Instead, the water runs off streets and buildings, collecting trash and dangerous chemicals on its way. This contaminated water overflows into our streams and rivers, creating public health hazards and toxic waters.

Stormwater projects create safe paths for polluted runoff to be captured and filtered before it reaches our waterways. They keep communities healthy and the environment clean.

When communities and their local governments work together to solve big problems like stormwater runoff, that's a story worth telling!