Polluted Runoff: Solutions

Anne Arundel County, MD

St Andrews United Methodist Church

mostcenter.org/casestories

Problem:

The school playground at St. Andrew's United Methodist Church and Day School flooded every time it rained, making the site inaccessible to school children. Further, runoff flowed to nearby Gingerville Creek, delivering pollutants and debris.

Solution:

To alleviate these issues, St. Andrew's installed a rain garden adjacent to the playground, and re-routed roof downspouts to a rock-lined swale flowing into the rain garden. In addition to keeping the playground flood-free, the rain garden serves as an outdoor classroom for students to learn about native plants, the water cycle, and stormwater management.

Water runoff from the roof and parking lot was flooding the school after every rain.

Bioretention strategies solved the problem!

Key Project Facts

Project Type: Bioretention

Scale: 5,000 square feet

Funding Sources: MD Department of Natural Resources' Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund

Partners: MD Department of Natural Resources; St. Andrews United Methodist Day School; Severn Grove Ecological Design LLC

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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.

Storm water 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!