

## READY Program

### Problem:

There are few opportunities for youth to earn money and acquire job skills in today's competitive job market. Local jurisdictions are also interested in economical ways to meet water quality goals.

### Solution:

Restoring the Environment and Developing Youth (READY) is a program working to create green jobs for young adults (16 to 24 years old) while improving watershed health through the reduction of stormwater runoff. Using municipal county grants designated for stormwater management projects, READY provides high school and college students with paid summer jobs, while simultaneously helping the county meet its water quality goals.

READY provides a formal training program for its employees, and many youth have continued to work after high school graduation, earning up to \$16/hour as crew leaders. READY also employs eight full-time, year-round staff.

The Parks & People Program has partnered with READY to review the effectiveness of its installations, monitor pollution reductions, and to replicate successful Green jobs programs throughout the region.



## Key Project Facts

**Cost per Average Rain Garden:** \$13.26/SQ FT including labor and materials

**Average Time Required to Install:** 4.75 work days for crew of 6 plus a team leader

**The Funding Sources:** County stormwater fees, grants from the Chesapeake Bay Program and other Bay area funders as administered by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay.

**The Partners:** People Acting Together for Howard County (PATH), The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Howard County, Parks & People, University of MD Sea Grant Extension

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**Video:** [http://www.greenforall.org/image\\_restoring\\_the\\_environment\\_and\\_developing\\_youth](http://www.greenforall.org/image_restoring_the_environment_and_developing_youth)

## 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!**