

Kansas City, Mo.,

takes a comprehensive approach to wet weather

It may be no surprise that the “City of Fountains”—Kansas City, Mo.—has for years taken a comprehensive approach to wet weather management. It aims to safeguard local water resources and support economic development.

Kansas City, Mo., has a Wet Weather Solutions Program to address both wastewater and stormwater problems. To proactively help pay for the burgeoning costs of wet weather management and incentivize use of green infrastructure, the city created a stormwater utility in 1999. It uses impervious surface area as a means of determining fee structure. Residents now pay a combined bill that includes water, wastewater and stormwater.

Years later, the city later settled a consent decree with the U.S. EPA (2010) that uses green infrastructure measures in lieu of/in addition to gray controls. Major green efforts began with the Middle Blue River Basin Green Solutions Pilot Project, which initially covered about 100 acres in the city’s older neighborhoods (similar to Peoria). Among other green improvements, this included 91 rain gardens, almost 400 feet of bioswales and 5,200+ feet of porous concrete sidewalk.

In 2012, this pilot was heralded as the largest green CSO control study in the nation.



In this 11-minute documentary, the Kansas City, Mo., Water Services Department shows off its pilot project to measure and evaluate the performance of green solutions within a portion of the Middle Blue River Basin. It represents just one component of the city’s commitment to use green solutions to control runoff as part of the Overflow Control Plan that was submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources in January 2009. Watch at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOgcjUNrNSU>

ADDITIONAL READING:

- More about this pilot project: http://www.stormh2o.com/SW/Articles/Kansas_Citys_Green_Solutions_Pilot_Project_Brings_18846.aspx
- KCWaterServices site: <https://www.kcwaterservices.org>
- National Resources Defense Council Case Study: http://www.nrdc.org/water/pollution/rooftopsii/files/RooftopstoRivers_KansasCity.pdf