



# The Green Infrastructure Education Network



## Project Summary

This project has been created through funding by the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Urban Waters Program. The goal of this project is to connect with community organizations, schools, industries and other business to create a green infrastructure education network that collaborates to bring high-quality education and outreach to Omaha metro students, citizens, and the workforce. These great organizations each bring something to the table that the others can benefit from, such as meeting spaces, experienced professionals, materials, equipment, people, ability to spread the word, etc. In addition to sharing resources, the network can share knowledge on stormwater issues and green infrastructure principles and practices. This network will allow consistent information and experiences to be shared among everyone to improve the overall understanding and management of stormwater and green infrastructure.



East View of Creighton Prep



West View of Creighton Prep



Country Club Bioretention

Green infrastructure is an effective way to reduce pollution being discharged into the Missouri River and Papillion Creek, and provides many additional benefits to Omaha and other communities within the watershed. Green infrastructure practices are being designed and installed more frequently every day; having a strong, knowledgeable community to support these practices is critical. Below are the three areas of focus for the network. Join in on the fun with the Green Infrastructure Education Network!

### Green Infrastructure in School

Many great green infrastructure projects have been installed across the Omaha metro area, including at schools. The network will seek to connect near-by schools with these projects so they can be utilized in & out of the classroom.

#### Goal

- Support the development of curriculum and lessons that related to the Nebraska State Education Standard
- Provide field trip opportunities, class presentations, or other resources to support green infrastructure use in schools



2015 Omaha Green Infrastructure Tour

### Local Workforce

Green infrastructure practices are being installed every day, and quality installation and maintenance are critical for its success. The network will provide practical training and hands-on experiences with green infrastructure principles and practices, with a strong focus on small and emerging businesses.

#### Goal

- Develop practical materials and hands-on training opportunities for local businesses and individuals
- Arrange educational workshops or activities for the public
- Train-the-trainer on stormwater and green infrastructure topics



2015 Omaha GI Tour of Saddle Hills Park

### Underserved Communities

All areas have stormwater issues, including low and moderate-income neighborhoods. The network will have a strong presence in these communities to support their efforts.

#### Goal

- Provide targeted outreach activities to these areas
- Receive feedback and adapt to needs of the community

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# Green Infrastructure Industry Toolkit



As our population grows, natural landscapes are replaced with development, i.e., roads, buildings, driveways, etc.... When it rains, rainwater falls onto these hard surfaces and cannot soak into the ground as it did with those natural landscapes. This stormwater runoff picks up pollutants and debris as it flows into our rivers, lakes, and drinking water sources.

## What is Green Infrastructure?

Green Infrastructure (GI) is a way to use and mimic nature (topography, soil, and plants) to capture and filter stormwater by slowing it down, sinking it into the ground, and spreading it out as close to where it lands as possible. The result is cleaner water, healthier environment for all and many other benefits beyond just managing stormwater.

### COMMON GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PRACTICE TYPES:

- Rain Gardens
- Bioretention Systems
- Rain Barrels/Cisterns
- Permeable Pavement
- Green Roofs
- Bioswales



Adams Park Wetlands

## Green Infrastructure Benefits

### ENVIRONMENTAL

- Reduced flooding, pollution, and erosion
- Recharging groundwater supplies
- Increases wildlife habitat

### ECONOMIC

- Increases property value
- Attracts residents and commercial investment
- Encourages redevelopment

### SOCIAL

- Increases recreational opportunities to improve health
- Experiences in nature can reduce stress
- Increases community pride

## WE NEED YOU!

As of October 2017 in the greater Omaha area, there are **over 951 certified practices that have been installed** to meet the Post-construction Stormwater Ordinance with **1,139 more being designed and constructed** currently. Over 2/3 of these projects are Green Infrastructure types.

With over 2,000 GI & other practices going in to manage stormwater, **knowledgeable and experienced workers are needed** to maintain them into the future. Whether you operate a company or are an individual interested in learning more, visit [OmahaStormwater.org](http://OmahaStormwater.org) for more resources and events to help you out!

## Additional Online Resource

Green Infrastructure at Home: <https://omahastormwater.org/residential/giathome/>  
Omaha Stormwater Website: <https://omahastormwater.org/>  
Omaha Plants: <http://omahaplants.org>