

Keeping Tabs on Storm Water



Today's downtrodden economy has many people getting back to basics—brown-bagging lunches, ditching pricy gym memberships for good old-fashioned jogs and opting for relaxed evenings at home rather than nights out on the town.

In recent years, the storm water industry has served as an excellent example of making the most of existing resources. In light of expanding reuse technologies and applications, what was once viewed as a waste product has evolved into an asset.

Innovative municipalities, project owners and everyday citizens have learned that recycling rainwater can help them streamline nonpotable tasks such as irrigating

landscaping, flushing toilets and washing cars. In doing so, these practical users go beyond achieving simple chores—they also protect the environment and their pocketbooks. Amid concerns ranging from population growth to drought-prone environments, many local governments and some states have jumped on the storm water catchment bandwagon, encouraging water users to take advantage of this alternative supply opportunity.

General economic woes and the ongoing push for more efficient storm water management are not the only trends affecting the storm water sector in 2009. To highlight a few major points:

- An understanding of the severity of our nation's crumbling infrastructure is on the upward. But even with the new economic stimulus package taking effect, the list of shovel-ready projects in dire need of attention and funding remains alarmingly lengthy.
- The "green" storm water sector continues to flourish in 2009, appealing to developers' desire to earn regulatory credits and end-users' enthusiasm for environmentally friendly, aesthetically pleasing and low-maintenance runoff management and treatment.
- Baby boomers are reaching retirement age, and the number of young people qualified to assume critical job openings in the water field is projected to fall short.

SWS understands the impact issues such as these have on your work. To learn more about the storm water industry's current situation, we went straight to the source—you, our subscribers. The result is SWS' inaugural State of the Industry Report, published in this issue to provide a current, detailed assessment for your review.

To help you do your job best, our editorial staff will be keeping tabs on the hot topics covered here as well as those that emerge moving forward. We'll relay the latest industry developments to you daily and, as always, look forward to your feedback.

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