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New Leaf




Spring is here for many parts of the country—a time of year that makes us think about rebirth and new life after a stagnant season of cold weather and little activity. It was a long, harsh winter for much of the nation, and sometimes it seemed like spring would never come. The ice and snow have gone, however, renewing our hope that bad weather cannot last forever.

In the spirit of spring, *Storm Water Solutions* brings you the sixth-annual State of the Industry report, which collects data from a survey of randomly selected readers and breaks it down into trends for the current year and forecasts for the next.

Budgets—always at the forefront of everyone's minds—show a slight uptick on the lower end of the scale: Forty-five percent of you are working with a budget of \$100,000 or less—fewer than last year, when 55% of respondents said that was their budget. There also was budget growth in the middle of the scale—between \$100,000 and \$999,999—but fewer respondents than in 2013 are operating with million- or multimillion-dollar budgets.

New construction and upgrades are in the works for many of you, with 44% planning new construction in the next two years and 37% planning upgrades within the same time frame—both up from last year, as well as 2012. Thirty-nine percent and 42% of respondents had plans for new construction in 2012 and 2013, respectively, and the current number for 2014 shows a slow but steady growth in the available funding and staffing for new projects.

For the fifth consecutive year, you rated regulations and compliance, the economy, and storm water management/flood control as the three topics most important to your organizations in the coming year. Regulations and compliance remain the top-most concerns for the third year running. This is not surprising, considering that we have been expecting a national storm water rule from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) since June 2013—until the end of this past March, when EPA suddenly changed course and said its focus would now be on supporting individual communities in their storm water management and not on national rulemaking. It is not clear yet whether this will weaken enforcement of current regulations.

SWS is committed to following this and other industry trends and stories to keep you informed and prepared. Keep checking out the magazine, website, social media and e-newsletters, and keep in touch by e-mailing us at swseditor@sgcmail.com. 



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