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Education

Gov. Livingston High School New Rain Garden Works to Reduce Stormwater Flooding

By TAP INTO BERKELEY HEIGHTS STAFF

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BERKELEY HEIGHTS, NJ - Berkeley Heights continues to take steps toward its goal of establishing rain gardens on public property within the Township with the newest garden planted in front of Gov. Livingston High School through the efforts of Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program as part of a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant..

[Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program](https://www.tapinto.net/towns/berkeley-heights/articles/gov-livingston-high-school-new-ra...) constructed a pair of terraced rain gardens at GL. Richard Leister, Chairman of the Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission along with the help of Gov. Livingston seniors Meera Savage and Kate O'Donnell volunteered to work alongside the Rutgers Cooperative Water Resources staff.

The two connected rain gardens cover 1,260 square feet and can collect more than 130,000 gallons of stormwater and allows it to seep into the aquifer, said Leister.

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Rain Gardens resemble regular gardens; the difference is in the depth of the excavation and the location on the site. They are designed to capture and filter the runoff water, reduce the amount of stormwater that goes into the drain, and, by allowing water to slowly infiltrate the ground, they recharge the groundwater supply. Rain gardens allow 30 percent more water to soak into the ground than a regular lawn. Once the garden is established, maintenance is relatively light and only involves weeding, mulching and thinning.

The Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission continues to encourage residents to be aware of what they can do for the environment. "Rain barrels and rain gardens keep stormwater from going down the drain and so help reduce downstream flooding," said Leister.

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