**CAMDEN GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE INITIATIVE**

In July 2010 the Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) Water Resources Program entered into a partnership with the Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority (CCMUA) to pilot a community-based initiative implementing green infrastructure projects throughout the City of Camden and Gloucester City.

This pilot program being led by the CCMUA and RCE Water Resources Program will focus on reducing impacts to waterways and neighborhoods from combined sewer overflows, flooding, and sewer backups into private properties. CCMUA and the RCE Water Resources Program are currently taking the first steps needed to develop this community-based initiative. The pilot program includes:

* educating community leaders, businesses, and residents on the benefits and opportunities for green infrastructure projects;
* providing training to local contractors on green infrastructure installation techniques; and
* establishing a network of community-based organizations to provide capacity for continual growth and expansion of the program.

The partners have committed to and invested in completing the following tasks by June 2011:

* Preparing a City-wide feasibility study for green infrastructure projects (rain gardens, rain barrels, water harvesting, pervious paving, etc.);
* Hosting a series of local workshops and meetings with community leaders and activists from each Camden City neighborhood and in Gloucester City;
* Identifying a total of 40 priority demonstration rain garden, water harvesting, and green infrastructure projects throughout the City of Camden and Gloucester City;
* Establishing a community-based network to support on-going development, installation, operation, and maintenance of green infrastructure projects.

Our initial target is to identify and secure funding to implement pilot rain garden, water harvesting, and other green infrastructure projects to prevent stormwater from reaching the combined sewers in the City of Camden and Gloucester City.

The partners have begun work over the past several months to develop and establish relationships with local community leaders in the City of Camden. In addition, they have compiled background information and completed mapping needed to assess green infrastructure needs and opportunities in each of the twenty unique neighborhoods within the City of Camden and Gloucester City.

The following organizations have expressed interest and support for the effort and have formed a Steering Committee to help guide and direct efforts of the Camden Green Infrastructure Initiative:

* NJDEP Office of Brownfields
* Rutgers Camden/Walter Rand Institute
* Cooper’s Ferry Development Association
* Cramer Hill Community Development Corporation
* New Jersey Tree Foundation
* Heart of Camden
* Center for Transformation
* South Jersey Land and Water Trust
* Camden County Soil Conservation District
* Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Camden County
* Camden County 4-H

For more information about the Camden Green Infrastructure Initiative, please contact Andy Kricun, Deputy Executive Director, CCMUA (856.541.3700) or Jeremiah Bergstrom, Senior Project Manager at the RCE Water Resources Program (732.932.9800 x6126).