

# POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

## Philadelphia goes green (fifth year)

Last month marked the fifth anniversary of an agreement between the city of Philadelphia and environmental regulators to use green infrastructure instead of pipes and holding tanks to prevent polluted stormwater from flooding into the city's streams and rivers.



Commentary by  
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### Green infrastructure

Philadelphia aims to capture stormwater where it falls. To do this, the city is planting more trees; putting "green" roofs on buildings; removing excess impervious surface and creating rain gardens; and using porous pavement which absorbs stormwater. Philadelphia is the largest American city to be certified by the federal Environmental Protection Agency to use green infrastructure to control stormwater, but scores of other cities are also doing it.

### 20-year program

Philadelphia's full effort will take another 20 years, but the results after five years show green infrastructure is working even better than expected.

### Pottstown is next

Here in Pottstown, we should be paying close attention, because our borough is also under the gun to

manage stormwater before it flows into the Schuylkill River.

Pottstown has 60 miles of streams that were arched over as Pottstown developed over the last 150 years. They are used to collect stormwater and direct it into the Manatawy Creek and Schuylkill River.

Stormwater also infiltrates Pottstown's 70 miles of sanitary sewer lines, which can overwhelm the sewage treatment plant and allow untreated water to flow into the river.

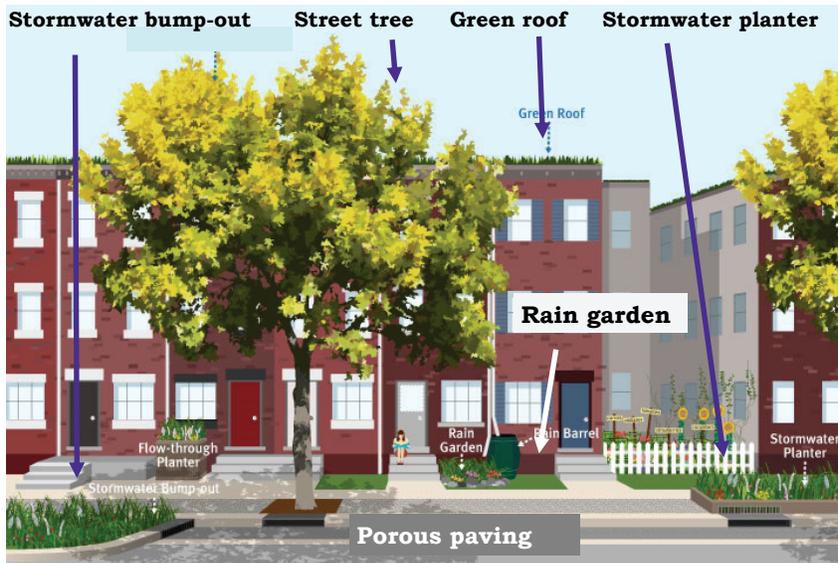
In addition, Pottstown has a problem with carcinogenic chemicals called PCBs, which are now banned but were used for decades in heavy industry.

Regulators will require Pottstown to keep PCBs out of the river.

Last year, the Pottstown Borough Authority, which manages Pottstown's water and sewer lines, hired an engineering firm to research and create a "stormwater master plan."

Green infrastructure is proving to be the least expensive and most environmentally sound way to manage stormwater. It should be a major part of Pottstown's plan.

### Green City Clean Waters



**Methods used in Philadelphia to plant vegetation which captures and purifies rainwater rather than allowing it to flow untreated into streams and the Schuylkill and Delaware rivers.**