



# STORIES OF PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING HEALTHY WATERS

## EPA Region 3 Water Protection Division

### Green Lessons in Class, on Grounds at Philadelphia's Nebinger School

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EPA and a team of partners are helping the George W. Nebinger School in Philadelphia become a national model for stormwater management and educational programming.

With an audience of young students and a backdrop of a sweeping rain garden and a porous playground surface, EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin joined Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter and other officials on Earth Day 2015 to celebrate green infrastructure and a related curriculum at the Nebinger School.

[The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary](#) – one of EPA's National Estuary Programs – received \$250,000 from EPA and an equal amount in matching funds from the Philadelphia Water Department to develop and install a host of green features at the Nebinger School, located at 6<sup>th</sup> and Carpenter streets.

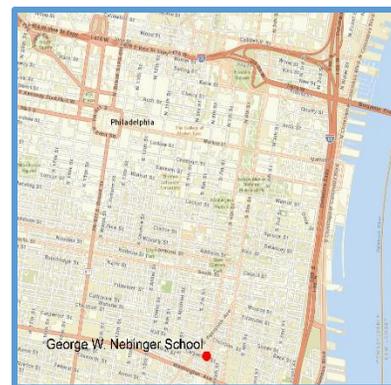
The action supports EPA's partnership agreement to help Philadelphia realize the environmental, economic and community benefits of the city's landmark [Green City, Clean Waters](#) program. Green infrastructure slows down and absorbs stormwater before it can inundate the city's sewer system and create sewage overflows into area waterways.

At Nebinger, features like the rain garden, bioswale, tree trenches and planters are designed to mimic natural areas. Others are man-made surfaces, such as the porous play surface and porous pavers. There is also a below-ground basinto capture some of the runoff.

As part of the curriculum, students maintain the school's playground area, which includes the green features, a mural of recycled materials and a community vegetable garden. A rain barrel supplies water for the garden and neighbors offer to tend the garden when the students are away. The curriculum is designed to be adaptable in other urban watersheds in the region.

The project also provides an opportunity for Philadelphia students to collaborate with similar schools in the City of Rio de Janeiro, Philadelphia's sister city in stormwater management, as part of the [Joint Initiative on Urban Sustainability \(JIUS\)](#), formed to advance sustainable cities.

Officials at the 2015 Earth Day event said the Nebinger School, with its projects to support clean water and its lessons to build an environmental ethic among students, was the perfect place to mark the special occasion.



#### AT A GLANCE

- EPA and the Philadelphia Water Department each provided \$250,000 for green projects and a related curriculum at the Nebinger School
- Actions support Philadelphia's Green City, Clean Waters stormwater management program
- Large rain garden, porous playground surface among the improvements



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