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The Dane County Land & Water Resources Department is Now Accepting Applications from Local Groups for Two Grants Aimed at Protecting Area Waters

MADISON, WI – January 17, 2019 - The Dane County Land & Water Resources Department and the Madison Area Municipal Stormwater Partnership are currently accepting grant applications for their Storm Drain Mural Program and Free Native Plants for Schools and Communities Program. Both grants aim to protect area waters, either by educating Dane County residents about stormwater pollution through art or by planting more native plants in local communities to establish root systems and reduce stormwater runoff.

“Our communities value our natural resources and want to make sure they can be enjoyed for many years to come,” said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. “By applying for these grants, local groups can help preserve our environment and raise awareness about keeping area waters clean.”

Launched in 2016, the [Free Native Plants for Schools and Communities Program](#) helps provide schools and community groups with free native plants to improve water quality and offer educational opportunities. The deep root systems of native plants help decrease soil compaction and infiltrate water back into the ground, reducing stormwater runoff and protecting nearby water bodies. Native plants are also more drought tolerant and disease resistant, and provide important food and habitat to wildlife and pollinators.

Since the program began, more than 4,700 plants have been distributed to 15 schools and 16 community groups, including neighborhood associations and community centers. In 2018, over 1,200 plants were donated to 18 schools and community projects through his program. Schools and community groups located within Dane County are encouraged to apply. **Applications are due by February 1.**

Launched in 2018, the [Storm Drain Mural Program](#) uses storm drains as a canvas to educate Dane County residents about stormwater pollution through art. Water that enters a storm sewer often travels to local waterways without being cleaned—carrying trash, soil and other pollutants to our lakes, rivers and streams. The goal of these colorful murals is to capture the attention of those who pass by, help them understand where the stormwater that enters their storm drain flows, and get them thinking about what they can do to keep the drains and our area waters clean.

Led by Dane County, the Madison Area Municipal Stormwater Partnership, and Dane Arts Mural Arts, the Storm Drain Mural Program allowed 20 murals to be painted across 13 different Dane County communities last year. A total of 10 storm drain murals will be added to Dane County's landscape in 2019. Municipalities, organizations, schools, and community groups located in Dane County that are interested in having an area storm drain mural painted are encouraged to apply. **Applications are due by February 15.**

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