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Governor Rell: Work Starts Thursday Morning to Make State Capitol “Greener”

Governor M. Jodi Rell today announced that work will begin this Thursday morning on an initiative that will make the State Capitol a “greener” place. (See attached designs.)

The project aims to reduce stormwater runoff along Capitol Avenue and Trinity Street while demonstrating to cities, towns, developers, and homeowners the value of “green” techniques.

Several improvements will be made to the State Capitol grounds, including the installation of rain gardens, rain harvesting systems and new walkways designed to allow rainwater to filter into the ground instead of running off into the sewer system.

“We want Connecticut’s State Capitol to serve as a model for the benefits and the beauty of low impact development,” Governor Rell said. “These cost-effective ways of improving the grounds at the State Capitol will provide visitors with the opportunity to see how a green environment can be created.”

The discharge of stormwater runoff can impact natural resources and water quality when it is discharged into rivers and streams. It can also cause sewage overflows when it is added to combined sewer and stormwater systems as is the case in Hartford.

The projects, which will be completed by the end of the year, include:

Green Roofs: Green roofs capture rainwater, delay and lessen runoff into the storm systems, and can reduce heating and cooling costs.

Rain Gardens: Rain gardens will collect runoff from streets and parking lots and naturally treat the runoff by filtering it through the ground.

Rain Harvesting: Rain harvesting will consist of installing a cistern below ground to capture the rainwater from the building’s roof leaders and use that rainwater for irrigation of the capitol grounds.

Porous Surfaces: Several porous surfaces will be demonstrated at the Capitol grounds by installation of porous sidewalks and walkways and a pervious asphalt paving area.

The Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) is responsible for construction administration of the project.

“The District treats millions of gallons of storm water each year which would not otherwise require treatment. Every gallon of storm water we can remove from the combined sewers of Hartford reduces treatment and operating costs for the MDC,” said MDC Chief Executive Officer Charles Sheehan. “We believe the Green Capitols project will demonstrate alternatives to traditional pipes and catch basins for the management of storm water. Adoption of green alternatives will result in the diversion of this water from our sewer system.”

The Governor and Sheehan thanked the General Assembly’s Joint Leadership for their cooperation and facilitation of this project.

For more information on other low impact development ideas visit the state Department of Environmental Protection’s website at:

http://www.ct.gov/dep/lib/dep/water_inland/wetlands/segmentii2009lidwebsites.pdf