A rain shower might not be the perfect time to install a raingarden, but it does make the point that we need to make more water soak into the ground.

The first group of Master Water Stewards was out in force on Saturday, September 28, installing raingardens, connecting downspouts to rain barrels, and working with their neighbors to reduce polluted runoff.

The Master Water Stewards program is a partnership between the Freshwater Society and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, funded by the Clean Water Fund. The program recruits, educates and certifies local community leaders who can work with their communities to reduce urban runoff.

On this rainy weekend, Stewards completed projects on three residential sites in South Minneapolis. The projects are the final step in a certification process similar to a Master Gardener, or Master Naturalist, certification. Stewards participate in a 50-hour course of study, learning everything from the history of water policy, to the basics of environmental decision-making and community engagement, to how and where to build a raingarden.

Teams of Stewards collaborate to complete a Capstone project that involves installing a stormwater management project like a raingarden, and conducting an education and outreach campaign in their neighborhoods.

Applications for the 2014 class of Master Water Stewards opened on October 1. Through the generous funding provided by the Clean Water Fund, classes in 2014 are offered at no cost to Stewards. Applicants must live in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, and preference will be given to candidates in the middle section of the watershed, in St. Louis Park, Edina, Hopkins, Minnetonka and Richfield. For more information, or to apply to become a Master Water Steward, go to http://masterwaterstewards.org/.

**WHAT CAN I DO?**

**Make a difference!**

- **TAKE ACTION** support the Freshwater Society!
- **BECOME** a Master Water Steward.
- **PROTECT** water when you do your fall yard work.
- **ATTEND** a lecture.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- November 5: Moos Series Lecture, University of Minnesota, St. Paul Campus
- November 6: Metro Summit, Hopkins, MN
- November 14: Give to the Max Day

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**PHOTO CONTEST**

Do you have a fall photo that is worthy of being published?

Whether you’re a seasoned photographer or are just picking up the hobby we want to see your work!

**Enter** the Fall Facebook photo contest for the 2015 Minnesota Weatherguide Environment Calendar!

**Join the Society – Get the Weatherguide!**

Become a new member of the Freshwater Society and you’ll receive the new, 2014 Minnesota Weatherguide Environment Calendar. It’s a win-win!

Help us protect freshwater resources and you’ll enjoy a plethora of amazing regional photography, Nature Notes, weather history and meteorological information, gardening tips and much more. **Become a member!**

**Please Help Support Freshwater!**

It’s that time of year when donors throughout the state are captivated by a whirlwind of media messages asking them to support their favorite charity for Give to the Max Day. This year, Give to the Max Day is scheduled for Thursday, November 14.

In 2012, this event inspired more than 53,000 generous donors from Minnesota and beyond to give $16.3 million dollars, shattering previous event records.

We hope we are meeting your expectations for protecting water now and for future generations. If so, please support our programs by [donating](http://masterwaterstewards.org/).

Master Water Stewards – Community leaders are trained about water pollution, reach out to the public and install water protection projects in their neighborhoods.

Minnesota FarmWise – Conservation-minded farmers mentor others on sustainable farming practices.

Moos Speakers Series – Internationally known environmental experts share their cutting-edge ideas to address water issues.

Your donations make these programs possible. Please don’t wait for Give to the Max Day on November 14 to make your contribution. [Give now](http://masterwaterstewards.org/).
Metro Summit Focuses on Legacy Funding

Join us November 6 for this year’s Metro Summit for individuals and groups committed to protecting lakes and rivers. This event – sponsored by the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and hosted by the Freshwater Society – is for anyone interested in protecting and improving Minnesota’s surface water resources: individual citizens, lake or river associations and local government representatives.

Most of us have heard about the Legacy Fund amendment passed in 2008 that deducts sales tax revenues to among other things, protecting water resources. At this year’s summit, Steve Woods, assistant director of the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, will discuss how citizens and local government units can access and use that money. There will also be a panel of citizens and local government representatives reporting on their use of Legacy money and the results they achieved.

The event will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday November 6 in Room 233 of the Eisenhower Community Center in Hopkins. There is a $10 registration fee to cover dinner. Register and pay on-line.