



A SUMMER OF PROGRESS ON CLEAN WATER



Hello, and happy fall!

We're excited to share our reflections on the many accomplishments of the Clean Water is Good for Business Steering Committee this past summer. Accomplishments made possible by your continuing support and engagement!

Over the past few months, our members have proposed land-use regulations to protect coastal communities better, designed a cemetery landscape to promote beauty and stormwater management, and addressed the prevalence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in national water systems. None of these accomplishments would be possible without your generous time and support.

More than ever before, with the adverse effects of climate change looming for so many communities, it is vital to continue this work of stormwater and clean water management. To drive even greater impact, we need you by our side! *Please consider donating today to help us protect our water systems and create healthier, more resilient communities for future generations.*

Together, we can keep the momentum going—one drop at a time.

[SUPPORT OUR
CLEAN WATER WORK](#)



COMMUNITY-BASED COLLABORATIVE PFAS SUMMIT

On June 14, the American Sustainable Business Network and the New Jersey Sustainable Business Council were two of a number of key partners involved in [The Community-Based Collaborative PFAS Summit](#). The event, sponsored and funded by the Hugo Neu Corporation and hosted by the Stevens Center for Sustainability, focused on how greater cross-sector collaboration can help address the adverse impacts of PFAS or “forever chemicals.”

PFAS are highly toxic chemicals that are pervasive in our environment due to both their frequent use and their very slow decomposition. Prolonged exposure to PFAS has been linked to harmful health effects, such as [kidney cancer](#), [liver cancer](#), [obesity](#), [decreased fertility](#) and more.

The Summit featured Robert Bilott as the keynote speaker. Bilott is an accomplished attorney whose lawsuits against DuPont on the behalf of a West Virginia community were highlighted in the 2019 film “Dark Waters.” Throughout the Summit, panel discussions centered around topics such as community engagement, environmental justice, and the need to strengthen regulations.

ASBN’s co-founder and president David Levine, a featured panelist, spoke to the business community’s role in addressing and mitigating PFAS contamination. **“We do not have to choose between protecting the environment, protecting our communities, and moving a strong economy,”** he said. Levine also highlighted the need for laws and policy that ensure sustainable practices, and he spoke to the need for more legislative advocacy.



Read the full [“Summit Highlights Report”](#) here.



ACTION ALERTS!!

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL FRESHWATER CHALLENGE

Earlier this year, the White House launched the [America the Beautiful Freshwater Challenge](#) with the goal of protecting freshwater resources across the country. The initiative sets new national goals for wetland, river, and stream reconnection, restoration, and conservation. It calls on governmental, non-profit, and business organizations to advance their own actions in support of these goals.

The American Sustainable Business Network was one of the inaugural members of the Freshwater Challenge, and we hope you will join us and stand alongside the other 321 signatories in protecting our shared freshwater resources.

If you are interested in joining or have questions, please contact [Leslie Nguyen](#) at the White House Council on Environmental Quality.



IT'S TIME TO BAN PARAQUAT

Last month, for the annual Parkinson's National Day of Action, held during September's Organic Month, ASBN highlighted this crucial moment and the urgent need to address the connection between paraquat, a toxic herbicide still legal in the U.S., and Parkinson's disease. Despite being banned in 58 countries, paraquat continues to pose serious health risks, especially for farmworkers and rural communities with high exposure, who face increased chances of developing Parkinson's. As paraquat-resistant weeds rise, the threat to both human health and sustainable farming grows. **Dive into ASBN's latest [blog](#) and join us in urging the EPA to ban paraquat [here](#).**



STATE UPDATES!!

NEW YORK

Good news! New York Governor Kathy Hochul signed the Green Roof Tax Abatement bill (S.6409/A.6901) into law! This will reauthorize and extend New York City's property tax credit for green roofs and will remove barriers to make the program more broadly accessible. Green roofs are essential for large cities to endure the severe weather events brought on by climate change. These roofs mitigate flash flooding and sewage overflow through stormwater runoff retention. They also improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mitigate the urban heat island effect, and increase biodiversity. Contact water@ny-sbc.org to learn more about this legislation and other New York policy efforts.

NEW JERSEY

Over the past several months, New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection has proposed land-use regulations to better protect the state's residents from some of the effects of climate change such as chronic flooding, sea-level rise, and extreme weather. **The reform, known as Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL), encourages nature-based solutions, supports renewable energy, and improves stormwater management, among other aims.** Richard Lawton, the executive director of the New Jersey Sustainable Business Council, applauded Governor Phil Murphy's prioritization of these issues because it has the potential to better protect the business community. The "increasing risks and costs of climate change will impact the bottom lines and ongoing viability of all businesses," Lawton said. "It's in the long-term interest of all companies to support land management policies designed to build resilience." View the [REAL proposal here](#).



STATE UPDATES!!

PENNSYLVANIA

The Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia recently published the results from 2023-2024 Food Saver Challenge Report. The challenge involved **partnering with local businesses to help implement practices geared at reducing food waste**. Such a step combats some of the environmental effects of food waste, which generates 8% of greenhouse gas emissions, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, and **wastes 45 trillion gallons of water annually**, according to the **World Resources Institute**. SBN's campaign prevented approximately 85,000 pounds of food from entering landfills. In addition, the program helped businesses implement almost 150 food waste reduction practices which ranged from composting to redistribution. Throughout a six-month period, involved businesses composted 80,000 pounds and donated nearly \$83,000 worth of food. Read the full **"Food Saver Challenge Report" here**.

SBN is also partnering with WaterNow Alliance on green water infrastructure! Water Now Alliance is a nationwide network of water leaders seeking to advance sustainable, affordable, and climate-resilient water strategies. The partnership with SBN aspires to accelerate green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) installations on private properties in the greater Philadelphia Area. The organizations have created a survey for businesses in the Greater Philadelphia Area to learn how they are implementing GSI systems. The survey will collect quantitative and qualitative data that measure the effectiveness of GSI installations to date. If this is relevant to you, SBN and WaterNow invite you to **fill out the survey here**.



STATE UPDATES!!

DELAWARE

The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control is making strides in its Christina-Brandywine River Remediation Restoration Resilience (CBR4) project. The project is aimed at cleaning up the major waterways surrounding Wilmington, DE – the Christina and the Brandywine rivers. Both rivers facilitated the expansion of industry during the 19th and 20th centuries, but that expansion left extensive pollution from harsh industrial manufacturing and polluted the rivers with manmade toxic chemicals. heavy methods and other manmade chemicals. CBR4 is currently conducting a sediment remediation feasibility study and creating a framework to restore the river’s native ecology and overall health. Such work will not only benefit the environment; the project aims to make the rivers swimmable, drinkable and fishable too! Learn more about the project on [**Delaware Nature Society’s blog.**](#)





BUSINESS PROTECTING THE WATERSHED

[Laurel Hill](#), a Philadelphia cemetery organization, has taken a new step in its commitment to sustainability by prioritizing stormwater management in its recent development of new burial space. The privately-owned, non-denominational organization located in Philadelphia (Laurel Hill East) and Bala Cynwyd (Laurel Hill West), Pennsylvania, has served as a public space since the 1830s and consists of an accredited 265-acre arboretum, two historic cemeteries, and a funeral home. In 2022, Laurel Hill opened [Makom Shalom \(Place of Peace\)](#), a second burial area for those of the Jewish faith. The three-acre site was designed as a garden and incorporates stormwater management to ensure the longevity of the cemetery.

Makom Shalom's stormwater management focuses on limiting impervious surfaces, adapting infrastructure to the sloped topography, and the installation of gardens composed of native plants and ornamental trees.

The landscape features a series of terraced burial areas that gradually step down the slope, allowing each to nestle into the hillside, helping to prevent soil erosion. Due to the steep terrain, stormwater infrastructure was incorporated to handle runoff. Drainage systems are integrated throughout the section to capture and direct stormwater into subsurface infiltration basins. These basins provide water quality and volume control and use vertically oriented gabion baskets that distribute infiltration across the site yet provide space to accommodate future graves. (Continued on next page).



Permeable pathways and landscaped burial areas at Makom Shalom.



BUSINESS PROTECTING THE WATERSHED

In addition, a large-volume storage subsurface infiltration basin located at the slope's base employs plastic crates to increase storage capacity without expanding the basin footprint. This system prevents the stormwater discharge from overwhelming the existing storm sewer system or causing erosion.

The garden was designed with a 450-foot-long and eight-foot-tall promontory masonry wall and four additional curvilinear retaining walls to create an upper-level burial area with an overlook garden. The space is meant to offer a restful, contemplative space for visitors. The landscape was filled with native plants that have significance to Judaism and Jewish history, including willow, crepe myrtle, flowering almond, and cedar of Lebanon, to ensure that it felt harmonious.



Subsurface infiltration basins use gabion baskets beneath Makom Shalom

WHAT WE'RE READING!!

“How officials are handling ‘forever chemicals’ in water across the region”
(NBC10 Investigators)

“New York announces \$265 million for water infrastructure projects”
(Smart Water Magazine)

“Drinking water in communities of color is more likely to be contaminated by ‘forever chemicals,’ research finds” *(Northeastern Global News)*

“Scientists tied to chemical industry plan to derail PFAS rule on drinking water” *(The Guardian)*



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



The Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia (SBN) next GSI Partners Quarterly Meeting is October 2, 2024 at the Urban Arts Exchange Amphitheater in Wilmington, DE.

You're invited to join SBN's Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Partners for their next Quarterly Meeting on October 2! Attendees will learn about new green stormwater management projects in Wilmington, DE, tour the 15th and Walnut CSO Separation, Green Infrastructure Installation project, and learn about upcoming SBN programming. Light refreshments and drinks will be provided following the main agenda.

On October 28, the 2024 Delaware River Climate Practitioners Workshop will be held at the Discovery Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The event seeks to connect the Delaware River climate community and support a collaborative network to address complex climate challenges. Workshops are geared at helping attendees build their knowledge about implementing climate adaptation strategies in the Delaware River Basin.

[Learn more and register here!](#)