



STORMWATER AWARENESS: THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

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Introduction

- Stormwater is a major source of pollution
- And, two management practices are public education and engagement
- But, stormwater infrastructure is not frequently seen
- Therefore, it is challenging to raise awareness

Research Question

What are best practices used in public education and engagement programs that increase public awareness of stormwater pollution?

Internship and Methods

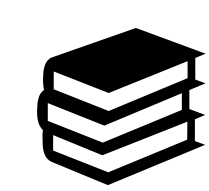
- I interned with Seattle Public Utilities' Pollution Prevention Community Engagement team
- Assisted in workshops and lead a group through a neighborhood drainage exercise
- Developed and administered a pre- and post-survey to youth participating in workshops to design a stormwater awareness mural
- Conducted a literature review of current research on outreach and engagement programs



Figure 1: Tour of Maddison Valley Stormwater Storage Facility

Results

Education Programs



Literature suggests small to moderately sized groups in classroom style teaching



Interactive group activities



"Make and use art, murals, and sculptures"- Survey response



Survey results suggest developing skills to influence change in personal lives and communities is most desired



"Tell them about the issue, tell them about possible rewards and benefits"- Survey response



"Showing them what to do"- Survey response

Engagement Programs

Literature suggests using;



Exercises that expose individuals to the infrastructure in their neighborhood



"Make a separate sewer and make sure only stormwater can be in it"- Survey response

Participating in infrastructure projects that are directly influenced by participants



"Talk to the community on social media"- Survey response



Expert guests working directly on projects related to pollution in the local area

Significance

- The importance of this research is understanding the impact stormwater awareness has on young minds
- Increase the amount of engagement opportunities within a community
- Creating young leaders in a community with skills to make change
- Further application is the urgent education of the public in areas affected by seasonal flooding events in our region (Figure 2)



Figure 2: Temporary flood barriers in the Duwamish Valley area

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