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Ohio EPA Awards Environmental Education Grants to Three Cuyahoga County Organizations

Ohio EPA has awarded more than \$78,000 in environmental education grants to three Cuyahoga County organizations. The grants from [Ohio EPA's Environmental Education Fund \(OEEF\)](#) are for the [Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District](#), [Cleveland Metropolitan Park District](#) and [Nature Center at Shaker Lakes](#). Ten grants were awarded statewide totaling \$330,540.

The Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District will use a \$16,031 grant for stream maintenance programs in the Rocky River watershed. The conservation district will produce a stream maintenance guide and perform workshops in 11 communities. In 2011, record precipitation in the county accelerated streambank erosion, caused debris jams and clogged culverts. Impacted communities will learn how to fulfill regulatory requirements while protecting the ecological function and value of the stream system.

The Cleveland Metropolitan Park District will use a \$44,950 grant to promote beneficial storm water management practices in the West Creek watershed. The park district will educate communities about storm water runoff and its impact on water quality and residential properties. The public awareness campaign will include workshops and site tours, and how-to projects focusing on rain gardens, riparian buffers and bio-swales.

The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes will use an \$18,000 grant to update environmental science curricula to align with changes to the Ohio Department of Education's academic content standards. The center's educators and naturalist staff will work with area teachers to revise the curricula and field test it in 72 area elementary classes during the next school year. The updated curricula will be fine-tuned and ready to implement in 2013-14.

The OEEF is administered by Ohio EPA. Grants up to \$50,000 are funded from one-half of the civil penalties collected by the Agency for air and water pollution control violations. Eligible grant recipients include environmental groups, public and private schools, colleges and universities, trade or professional organizations, businesses, and state and local governments. Approximately \$1 million is given each year.

The next OEEF grant application deadline is July 16, 2012. An electronic letter of intent to apply is due by July 9. Additional information is available [online](#) or by calling (614) 644-2873.

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