

Daviess County Project Receives Regional Recognition

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Engineering News-Record's (ENR) Midwest edition selected Washington, Indiana's constructed wetlands project as its top project for Civil Engineering/Infrastructure as part of its "2012 Best Projects" awards. The awards honor projects built in the past year across Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

Like many Indiana cities and towns, Washington's combined sewer system overflowed into local waterways during heavy rains. The city needed to fix the problem, but the traditional approaches of separating sewer and stormwater pipes or adding wastewater treatment capacity were very expensive. One study estimated the cost at \$53 million.

The City and Indiana-based Bernardin Lochmueller & Associates (BLA) developed an alternative that pumps the combined sewer overflows (CSOs), a mixture of rain runoff and raw sewage, to a 5-million-gallon storage tank where it is held until it can be treated by the wastewater plant. When the tank is full, additional runoff is routed to a 27-acre constructed wetland for treatment. There plants and gravel filter pollutants before the water passes through a UV-disinfection system and into Hawkins Creek. This project cost \$23.8 million, as well as saving the City over a \$1.6 million in annual operations and maintenance.

"A lot of cities and towns are struggling with how to address combined-sewer overflows," said Washington Mayor Joe Wellman. "We're ahead of the curve in the sense that we've not only cleaned up local waterways, we've also provided a stable base for economic development."

BLA President Mike Hinton agreed. While other cities still have tens of millions-worth of CSO improvements to construct to meet federal guidelines, Washington's improvements are already up and operating.

"This award wouldn't have happened without city officials, engineers, and state regulators working together," Hinton said. "This takes the best of sustainable engineering and provides a cost-effective way to ensure the city's creeks are clean and safe."

Evansville-based Bowen Engineering Corp. was the General Contractor on the project that went live this spring. The project was also recognized by Water & Wastes Digest as one of its Top 10 Projects.

Trey Hightower and David Hines, (Jen-Hill) and Tom Happel (Suntree Technologies), working with Bowen Engineering Corp installed Suntree and Jen-Hill's portion of the extraordinary technology at the outfall to the wetland. Tom Happel designed, engineered, and constructed the special treatment units.