

# Media Release

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May 28, 2007

For Immediate Release

## Victoria West Project Urban Rain Garden

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On Friday, June 8, 2007 the students of Victoria (Vic) West Elementary School will gather in the school courtyard at 9:30 a.m. to celebrate sustainability and the importance of water systems at their school. The students will be unveiling a painting completed earlier in the week depicting a new rain garden that is to be installed in the area currently covered by concrete.

This project began earlier this year when a group of Leadership Victoria students partnered with the school community to develop an educational and interactive rain garden. Project Urban Rain Garden is an interactive outdoor classroom, to be built on the grounds of the school. It will provide students with the opportunity to explore issues of sustainability, eco-system degradation, and how they can make a positive contribution to environmental improvement.

"We hope this partnership between the community and our school district serves as an example to inspire others", said Michael McEvoy, Chairman of the Greater Victoria School Board. "Our students learn about environmental sustainability while at the same time making a difference to improving their community. We are grateful to the staff of Vic West and for the generosity of our community partners to make this project a reality", McEvoy said.

When completed, the project will reclaim the paved urban playground into a rain garden that will act as an outdoor classroom, community gathering area, and inspiration for other schools and communities. Tremendous support has come from donors and from the School Board in developing this project and this enthusiasm alone illustrates how important this issue is to our community.

In order to share this experience and create a replicable model for other schools, a website ([www.urbanraingarden.ca](http://www.urbanraingarden.ca)) has been developed outlining the experience, the successes and best practices. This website will be maintained beyond the completion of the project, creating a technology link between the Vic West classroom and other classrooms worldwide. It is the intention that Project Urban Rain Garden will be a model that will be replicated by other schools, groups and individuals, helping to inspire people to take action, learn about environmental sustainability and eco-systems, and contribute to the improvement of the environment.

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