**Practicing what they preach**

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CRWD building showcases native plantings, pocket park, rain gardens, tree trenches, permeable pavement, and more

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) held its Grand Opening Celebration on Friday, Oct. 11. The new headquarters are located at 595 Aldine St. Following a ribbon-cutting ceremony, guests enjoyed local food from Los Ocampo, live music by the Americano Trio, art-making, kids’ activities, and building tours. CRWD broke ground on its new building in May 2018. The transformed site includes a pocket park with a water feature, native plantings, and an interactive educational exhibit on the corner of Thomas Avenue and Aldine Street. Also visible are rain gardens, tree trenches, and permeable pavement. These features do the good work of collecting and cleaning rainwater by allowing it to soak into the ground, rather than creating storm water runoff.

Administrator Mark Doneux, said, “Our mission is to protect, manage and improve the water resources of Capitol Region Watershed District. The work of CRWD has grown immensely over the past 20 years. We are excited to be able to demonstrate best practices for managing storm water runoff here at our new office.”

Building tours showcased a rainwater capture system including a 3,000-gallon cistern, local art, reclaimed wood from nearby Willow Reserve, solar panels and many other sustainability features. The Backyard Phenology Project's Climate Chaser was on site with their mobile lab to record and share stories of people’s observations about the changing climate.

Midway resident Anna McLafferty said, “We can’t survive without healthy water. CRWD is helping to reduce the negative impact of people on the environment. We live in the neighborhood and our kids love the pocket park, especially the pond.” (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)
Did you know...
CRWD, established in 1998, covers 40 square miles and includes portions of Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Maplewood, Roseville and Saint Paul. CRWD is governed by a five-member Board of Managers that works to protect, manage and improve the water resources of the watershed district.

Janice Erickson (holding daughter Azalia) attended the grand opening with her family on Oct. 11. Her sons Rocky and Alexander are photographers participating in the “Our Sacred Water” exhibit, which received a Partner Grant from CRWD and was shown, in part, at the grand opening event. (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)

Emily Baskerville (right) and Suzy Lindberg (left) explored the outdoor, interactive water feature. Both are connected to CRWD through their work at Houston Engineering, and were pleased to see how the new headquarters reflects CRWD’s commitment to the arts and community. Lindberg said, “CRWD makes me proud of our St. Paul water.” (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)

Phyllis Panzer (left) attended the event with her son-in-law, Jordan, and grandson, Cooper. She said, “I’m here to celebrate that business and industry care enough to partner in the management of local water resources.” (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)