

News

For Immediate Release
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DC's First Commercial Greenroof Installation Begins on K Street Project at 1425 K to Demonstrate Benefits, Feasibility for Widespread Local Application Prep continues 6/7; Planting begins Tues., June 8; Opening event is Monday, June 21

A cooperative project to demonstrate the commercial application of rooftops planted with pollution-reducing vegetation has begun in the heart of DC's business district. A collaboration of DC Greenworks, Casey Trees, and Blake Real Estate, the greenroof at 1425 K Street will document benefits for reduced storm water runoff, air pollution, and rooftop temperatures as it reduces building energy costs and extends the life of the roof.

DC Greenworks is also the general contractor for installation and is coordinating a planting team of young adults from Covenant House, a nonprofit youth services agency serving at risk youth. Casey Trees is co-organizer of the project and a tenant in the building owned and managed by Blake Real Estate. The project is supported by grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Watershed Protection Division of the DC Department of Health. Training for Covenant House youth was supported in part by the EPA and Bridges to Friendship partnership.

In the most heavily developed and paved areas in the city with few spaces for planting trees, greenroofs offer a practical alternative to reduce storm water runoff, temperatures, and air and water pollution. If 80 percent of eligible rooftops in the downtown area were planted as greenroofs, over 50 percent of rainwater falling in that area could be absorbed by or slowly percolated through the greenroof soil, according to the two nonprofits. This would significantly reduce the initial surge of storm water that triggers the release of untreated sewage into area rivers during combined sewer overflow events. By reducing air temperatures – a contributing factor to ozone formation – greenroofs, like trees, can help the District and surrounding jurisdictions meet federal air quality standards.

On Monday, June 7, the last of thirty-three 1,000 pound bags of soil will be hoisted above K Street and spread 3 inches deep over a 3,500 square foot area of roof. The planting of thousands of small, low-growing sedum plants will follow and should be concluded by Friday, June 11th.

A weather station to compare temperature, rainfall, and runoff from the planted roof and an adjacent 1,000 square foot control section that will not be planted, is also scheduled. An opening ceremony will be held on Monday, June 21. In coming months tours will be offered for builders, property managers, officials, regulators, and the public.

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Media Note: Reporters and photographers are invited to cover the 1425 K Greenroof installation and planting June 7-11. Call to schedule a visit or interviews. Media is also invited to the opening event, June 21. *Contact:* Dan Smith, 202/833-4010 x114, cell: 202/607-6224.