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June 20, 2011

**D.C. Students to Help Solve Local Stormwater Challenges
in the Anacostia and Potomac Watersheds**

***Public-Private Partnership Launches Environmental Education Program
Be Water Wise DC***

Washington, D.C.— District students and their teachers will help solve water challenges in the Anacostia and Potomac watersheds and learn how to protect and conserve local water resources as part of an innovative, hands-on environmental education program, **Be Water Wise DC**.

Students at 15 D.C. schools will take part in a unique water measurement and stormwater assessment activity as part of a new partnership between the [National Environmental Education Foundation](#), the District Department of the Environment, District of Columbia Public Schools, businesses and nonprofits. Stormwater runoff is a major challenge for the District of Columbia as rainwater collects pollutants on its path to storm drains leading to local waterways.

"Exposing our children to environmental issues is extremely important – as is allowing them to help solve the challenges we face today in our watersheds," said Mayor Vincent C. Gray. "Each of us has a role to play in helping to sustain our environment and I am pleased that programs such as **Be Water Wise DC** are available to help our children better understand the benefits and value of restoring and maintaining the District's environmental health."

Be Water Wise DC, a project of the National Environmental Education Foundation, includes math, science and language activities focused on water resource management at school and at home, building awareness of this precious resource. Students citywide, from kindergarten to 12th grade, will participate; the program will formally launch at the start of the school year in fall 2011. This is the third Be Water Wise program, following successful pilots in Miami and Atlanta.

"Learning about the role of water in our lives is important at any age," said DC Water General Manager George S. Hawkins. "But these lessons are much more powerful for young people, who have years to influence their friends and families' behavior and change the world for the better."

"This program can be a very powerful lesson for K-12 students to see their studies and their experiences have an impact in their schools, homes and community," said Diane Wood, president of the National Environmental Education Foundation. "Through our science-based

activities, training and innovative lesson plans, we know **Be Water Wise DC** can serve as a model for public-private educational partnerships.”

The **Be Water Wise DC** program will include lesson plans, training for teachers and school facilities staff, “ask-an-expert” opportunities with water professionals, hands-on water conservation testing and stormwater assessment plans for participating schools as well as grants for school-based projects. The program will conclude next spring when D.C. students share their projects and what they’ve learned with city officials.

“Through this unique partnership we hope to make a positive contribution to environmental awareness, to water resource management, and to schools in and around our nation’s capital,” said Loretta Abrams, Senior Vice President of Community Investment for HSBC - North America, lead sponsor of the program. “The genius of **Be Water Wise DC** is in highlighting the role we all can play in protecting local water quality through the responsible use of water at schools and at home.”

Johnson Controls, Inc. is supporting **Be Water Wise DC** by providing technical support with engineers to train teachers and facilities staff to help students perform water measurement activities. “Innovative programs like **Be Water Wise DC** will reap long term benefits for not only D.C. schools but the entire community, as students see how simple steps save school resources and protect the environment at the same time,” said Charles Farina, Mid-Atlantic Regional Manager - Education, Johnson Controls, Inc.

In addition to HSBC Bank and Johnson Controls, Inc., other partners include the Alice Ferguson Foundation, Anacostia Watershed Society, Casey Trees, Clean Water America Alliance, DC Greenworks, DC Water, District of Columbia Public Schools, the District Department of the Environment, EnvironMentors, National Geographic Education, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Forest Service.

Participating schools include:

- Ballou High School
- Capital City Public Charter School
- Cardozo High School
- E.L. Haynes Public Charter School
- H.D. Woodson High School
- John Eaton Elementary School
- Mann Elementary School
- Maury Elementary School
- McKinley Technology High School
- Seaton Elementary School
- Sharpe Health School
- Smothers Elementary School
- Takoma Education Campus
- Thomson Elementary School
- Washington Latin Public Charter School

For more information about Be Water Wise, visit www.eeweek.org/be_water_wise.

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The National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) provides knowledge to trusted professionals who, with their credibility, amplify messages to national audiences to solve everyday environmental problems. Together, we generate lasting positive change.

NEEF partners with professionals in health, education, media, business and public land management to promote daily actions for helping people protect and enjoy the environment. Through our primary programs -- Classroom Earth, National Public Lands Day, National Environmental Education Week, Business and Environment, Earth Gauge® and Health & Environment -- we offer Americans knowledge to live by. To learn more, call (202) 833-2933 or visit www.neefusa.org.