



**CITY OF BURLINGTON
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October 23, 2014

PRESS RELEASE:

***Burlington Engages Citizens to Adopt-a-Drain
Local Resident "Drain Defenders" Help Keep Storm Drains Flowing***

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The City of Burlington recently joined other communities around the nation by establishing a local Adopt-a-Drain program that enables citizens to adopt a storm drain near their home or business. Clogged storm drains are one of the leading causes of localized street flooding. Empowering citizens to help with this important task will allow City street maintenance crew resources to be directed to other important tasks in the days before and during storm and winter events. Additionally, citizens can keep a watchful eye over their drains to ensure there is no illegal dumping, thereby helping to protect our waterways.

"We all remember the damage flooding has caused during the severe rainstorms over the last couple of years," said Mayor Miro Weinberger. "The City worked hard to make improvements to our stormwater system, and as we see more and more intense storms, we understand that by working with volunteer citizens we can make greater strides. It's rewarding to see opportunities and connections between our local community and our dedicated City team grow, as well as to witness the positive results of these projects."

Adopters agree to check on their storm drains and help keep the tops of their drains clear of leaves and other debris, including ice during the winter months. The program includes a web map of the adoptable drains in the City where interested citizens may sign up as a Drain Defender and then select the storm drains they wish to adopt. When a person adopts a storm drain, they earn the right to name the drain.

To keep Drain Defenders safe, they must read and agree to safety guidelines before signing up. The Adopt-a-Drain program page can be found by visiting: <http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/DPW/ADOPT-A-DRAIN>.

Stormwater Technician Greg Johnson notes, "We suspect that many citizens are already taking care of the drains on their street, but wanted to provide them with a more formal and fun opportunity to engage with their stormwater infrastructure."

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While the Department of Public Works had long been interested in creating an Adopt-a-Drain program, research performed by the City Hall internship program helped to advance the project. The final development of the online webtool was a collaboration between Stormwater staff and City IT staff person Scott Duckworth.

Drain Defenders also can provide their addresses to receive a “Burlington Stormwater Drain Defender” sticker for their home or car.

