



Dave Mongeau

## Industry Pulse

Regulation and best management practices today—and where they're headed

The storm water industry is abuzz with change. Recent regulatory developments, for instance, are marked by a push to combine the power of natural and engineered solutions to achieve goals including infiltration and phosphorus removal. Dave Mongeau, general manager of Hydro Intl.'s U.S. Storm Water Division, shared insight on such trends in an interview with *Storm Water Solutions* Managing Editor Caitlin Cunningham.

**Caitlin Cunningham:** *SWS has featured many articles recently that emphasize the need for storm water professionals to make the most of site space. Is this an industry trend you're observing?*

**Dave Mongeau:** Yes, definitely. One of the big drivers at the moment is to minimize impervious area to the greatest extent possible. Anytime you're trying to do that it means every square foot of footprint you're looking to utilize becomes that much more critical.

**Cunningham:** *What can be done to promote space savings?*

**Mongeau:** There's a variety of techniques that are explored. Infiltration is a big one. More and more, we find that regulations look to infiltrate as much water as possible as opposed to how in the past, in all likelihood, it would have been discharged off a site.

**Cunningham:** *Do you think it's any less environmentally friendly or aesthetically pleasing to forgo natural storm water controls in favor of engineered solutions in doing so? Why or why not?*

**Mongeau:** It's a very changing landscape. If you go back 10 years or so, there was a heavy emphasis on the use of retention/detention ponds, generally considered a natural solution.

In recent years, there's been a lot of shift away from using those types of techniques because they leave standing

water on site, which in many cases is not environmentally friendly. The other drawback of large ponds is that they frequently take up a lot of room, working contrary to the site space goals.

Engineered/manufactured systems can certainly play a role in looking at alternatives to large ponds. You also see other techniques implemented now that only a handful of years ago were not heavily utilized—bioretention cells and techniques of this nature. It's not uncommon to see manufactured systems playing a role, primarily as pretreatment devices, to help ease the maintenance cycle on more natural systems and extend their life.

**Cunningham:** *What's ahead on the storm water regulation horizon?*

**Mongeau:** We're seeing two effects currently. First, there are a number of locations where in the past there were not real strong storm water regulations in place, and now they're starting to implement them for the first time. Then there's other locations where there's a long history of fairly aggressive storm water regulations; these locations are in a mode where they're going to their next phase of regulation, increasing the level of requirement because of what they've come to learn over the past 10 years or so about the techniques employed.

What we're seeing—certainly in areas where they're advancing

regulations—is a shift from a focus on removing total suspended solids to a focus on removing phosphorus because of its impact on water bodies.

Industry professionals have to look at new techniques because to a strong extent, the things they're used to doing may no longer fit the bill. Speaking from a manufacturer's perspective, we find that we have to stay ahead of trends and be in touch with what's happening on the regulatory front to determine what it means for a product mix. **SWS**

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