

October 2021 Our Stories, Redmond Connections

Redmond Mayor Angela Birney

Hello, I'm Redmond Mayor Angela Birney and welcome to another video in my monthly "Our Stories, Redmond Connections" series.

On average, every year eleven billion gallons of rain falls on Redmond and it needs to go somewhere. That's where the City's stormwater system comes into play and helps avoid local flooding and prevent pollution from reaching our lakes, rivers, and streams. And it's amazing what it takes to do that, let alone the dedicated city staff who manage and maintain it all 24/7.

This month, with wet fall weather and winter storms coming our way, I thought it would be interesting to ask two Public Works employees, one who helps maintain the city's stormwater system and another who lives in Redmond and has adopted a stormwater drain with her son, "why is protecting water a priority in Redmond?"

Aaron Moldver, Environmental Programs Supervisor – City of Redmond

I'm here at a stormwater pond in Northeast Redmond to share how the City's using new technology to better manage stormwater runoff.

As part of our Watershed Management Program we are always looking for new and innovative ways to manage runoff that are both cost-effective and can work in harmony with our neighborhoods to better protect the environment.

At this pond we are testing a new active control smart valve technology. The smart valve system continually monitors the water level in the pond. It communicates with cloud-based software to gather the latest weather forecast, and optimizes the valve setting to release water in a manner that better mimics the way water would have flowed to streams if this area were still forested. Redmond is one of the first cities on the west coast to use this high-tech approach to manage stormwater.

For more information on Redmond's Watershed and Stormwater Management Program and things you can do each day to help protect our lakes, rivers and streams, please visit our website.

Gaby Wolff, Redmond Resident, Water Maintenance and Operations Supervisor – City of Redmond

Our family adopted this storm drain to help Redmond prevent flooding in our neighborhood and keep pollutants out of local creeks, rivers, and lakes. It only takes fifteen minutes, twice a month to remove leaves, twigs, and candy wrappers from the top of the grate. We're proud to help Redmond keep the Sammamish River clean and healthy. Right, Ernie?

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For me...Growing up near the Columbia River I was aware at an early age of the power and importance of water. Water is the most important resource in our lives-from the basic need for survival to other needs, such as farming and forests, and even recreation. I think we can all agree that protecting water is a priority. As our climate continues to change, we will need to be even more diligent on how we manage this most basic resource. It's important that each of us do our part no matter how small to keep our waterways clean and healthy for everyone on our planet now and for future generations. I guess this topic brings out the science teacher in me.

Enough about me; I'm interested in hearing your thoughts. In the comments, please share why protecting water is important to you using the hashtag #RedmondConnections.

And please join me, and Gabby's family, in adopting one of Redmond's 3,400 storm drains. It's a great way to partner with the city's efforts and help safeguard our community's precious natural resources.

Thank you for making Redmond a great place to live, work, and play. See you next time!