

The History of Storm Water Management in Urbana

1906 - Drainage District Formed

Court order approved organizing the Saline District. The boundaries of the Saline Drainage District at this time included the Boneyard and the majority of the urbanized sections of Urbana and Champaign.

1934 - Boneyard Maintenance Work

Civil Works Administration (CWA) workers completed maintenance work on the Boneyard Creek in Urbana and Champaign. Work consisted of clearing obstructions to the flow, cleaning channel banks, and stabilizing channel banks with timbers.

1949 - Boneyard Transferred to UCSD

Boneyard Creek (Subdistrict C) was detached from the Saline Drainage District and jurisdiction for the Boneyard Creek was transferred to the Urbana and Champaign Sanitary District (UCSD).

1957 - Boneyard Improvements

UCSD proposed storm drainage improvement projects for Urbana. Improvements included:

1. Channel improvements to the Boneyard Creek from Cunningham Avenue to Goodwin Avenue, including sheet piling, channel bank cleaning, channel deepening, and channel relocation.
2. A new 72-inch outlet sewer to the Boneyard Creek for east and southeast Urbana.
3. General bank cleaning projects along the main Boneyard channel and branches.

Voters approved the bond issuance for this project in February 1958. Work began on this project in 1959 and continued until 1964.

1963 - Boneyard Improvements

The Boneyard Creek main channel was deepened by 3-ft from Lincoln Avenue to Race Street and the channel cross section was changed to a rectangular section with sheet piling walls and a concrete bottom.

1985 - Engineering Staff Added

A Civil Engineer and Engineering Technician were hired to implement improvements and assist with maintenance of Urbana's storm and sanitary sewer systems.

1986 - Shurts Street Basin

Two projects were performed: a \$271,630 storm sewer addition and a \$312,000 miscellaneous repairs project in which repairs were completed to the sanitary and storm sewers throughout the entire basin.

1987 - Florida Drive Area

A project was initiated to replace deteriorated sanitary and storm sewers in the Florida Drive area of Urbana, which cost approximately \$134,000.

1989 - Country Squire Area

A project was undertaken in the Country Squire Area to improve the sanitary and storm sewers in the amount of \$228,800.

1990 - Coler Avenue and Vermont-Delaware Areas

The City undertook a major project to rehabilitate and replace a number of sanitary and storm sewers in the Coler Avenue vicinity, east of Lincoln, between Washington and Illinois. The cost was \$70,700 for storm sewer repairs. The City also started the Vermont-Delaware Area Sewer project that resulted in spending \$98,800 on storm sewer work. This was in the area from Pennsylvania to Florida between Lincoln and Orchard.

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1991 - Nevada Street Area

The City started construction of a project on West Nevada, from Race to Lincoln, which resulted in spending \$60,000 on storm sewer improvements.

1992 - Cottage Grove Area

After an extensive study of the Cottage Grove Area, two major projects were undertaken, one between Washington and Fairlawn and another approximately three blocks west of Cottage Grove Avenue. Project costs were \$298,400 for sewer repairs and \$132,700 for sewer lining.

1993 - Washington Street

A major sewer project was completed along Washington Street from Coler Avenue to Race Street, which involved replacing a long segment of sanitary sewers and repair to a significant number of sanitary and storm sewers at an approximate total cost of \$475,000.

2000 - Boneyard Maintenance Agreement

Urbana, City of Champaign, and University of Illinois enter into the Boneyard Creek Improvement Agreement. This agreement calls for additional streamflow and precipitation data collection and modeling of Champaign Phase I Boneyard Improvements. The agreement also provides standards and frequencies for maintenance of the Boneyard Creek channel.

2002 – MS4 Technical Committee

An MS4 Technical Committee was formed by intergovernmental agreement between the City of Champaign, the City of Urbana, the Village of Savoy, the University of Illinois and Champaign County. The committee meets at least quarterly to share information and resources to best comply with USEPA clean water requirements.

2003 – NPDES Phase II Permit, Cycle 1

Urbana is a small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) and thus required to comply with Phase II of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Storm Water Program by submitting a Notice of Intent (NOI) to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The NOI was approved by the City Council at their February 17, 2003 meeting. The NOI served as the application for the NPDES Phase II Permit that covered all storm water discharge from sewers under City jurisdiction. The IEPA approved the City's NOI and issued a Phase II permit to the City effective through March 2008.

2004 - Boneyard Flood Plain Remapping

Urbana, Champaign, and the University of Illinois retained the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to remap the 100 year flood plain for the Boneyard Creek. The USGS study was submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to update their flood maps.

2006 – Boneyard Creek Community Day

The City of Urbana, City of Champaign, University of Illinois, Urbana Park District, Champaign Park District, and Prairie Rivers Network sponsored the first annual Boneyard Creek Community Day. The event was held on Earth Day - April 22nd, 2006 with 275 volunteers in attendance. Activities included storm inlet stenciling, stream clean-up, and naturalization efforts along the Boneyard Creek.

2006 – Illegal Discharge and Connection Ordinance

The City adopted a new illegal discharge and connection ordinance that prohibits non-storm water discharges into the City's storm water collection system.

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2007 – Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance

The City adopted a new erosion and sediment control ordinance to control water pollution from construction sites that disturb over 2,000 square-feet.

2007 – City wins Governor's Hometown Award

The City of Urbana, City of Champaign, and University of Illinois received a Governor's Hometown Award for the 2006 Boneyard Creek Community Day Clean-up Event in recognition of all the volunteers' efforts during the event and the positive impacts the event had on the communities.

2008 – Storm Water Pollution Brochure wins American Public Works Association Award

The City of Urbana received an American Public Works Association Journalism Award for the "You Are the Solution to Storm Water Pollution" brochure was created with the cooperation of the other MS4 Technical Committee participants.

2009 – NPDES Phase II Permit, Cycle 2

The NPDES Phase II Storm Water Permit Cycle 2 NOI was approved by the City Council at their January 9, 2008 meeting. The NOI served as the application for the NPDES Phase II Permit that covered all storm water discharge from sewers under City jurisdiction. The IEPA issued a Phase II permit to the City effective through March 2014.

2012 – Stormwater Utility Ordinance

The City adopted a stormwater utility ordinance to provide dedicated funds for stormwater management and comply with the NPDES Phase II Storm Water Permit requirements.

2012-2014 – Boneyard Creek Improvements Project

The Boneyard Creek Improvements project created a new public park and gathering space along the Boneyard creek from Griggs Street to Broadway Avenue. The project included channel naturalization and widening, gabion toe protection, stone landscaping, earth retaining walls, structural walls, storm sewers and landscaping.

2013 – New FEMA Floodplain Maps

New FEMA floodplain maps were adopted for Champaign County.

2013 – NPDES Phase II Permit, Cycle 3 NOI

The NPDES Phase II Storm Water Permit Cycle 3 NOI was approved by the City Council at their September 16, 2013 meeting. The NOI served as the application for the NPDES Phase II Permit that covers all storm water discharges from sewers under City jurisdiction.

2015 – 10th Annual Boneyard Creek Community Day

The City of Champaign, City of Urbana, University of Illinois, Urbana Park District, Champaign Park District, and Prairie Rivers Network sponsored the 10th annual Boneyard Creek Community Day. The event was held on April 18th, 2015. 500 volunteers cleaned 7 sites comprising 1,800 acres and 7.7 shoreline miles. Invasive species were removed from 0.5 shoreline miles and 165 cubic yards of litter was removed.

2016 – NPDES Phase II Permit, Cycle 3

The IEPA issued a Phase II permit to the City effective through February 2021.