THE PROBLEM
From single-family homes to churches, schools to businesses, property owners across the Chicago region pay millions of dollars to tackle basement and backyard flooding. An estimated one in four properties in the Chicago region are affected by high water from storms and sewage backup.

With increasingly severe weather and overloaded sewer systems, experts say the frequency and cost of flood damage will continue to rise over the next decade.

THE SOLUTION
If you own property that floods, you probably know there is rarely a single solution to the problem. But there are effective ways to minimize flooding.

Simple, low-cost tools such as building rain gardens, repairing private lateral sewage pipes, installing water permeable paving, even collecting roof runoff in rain barrels, can make a big difference.

Because these tools are not familiar to everyone, the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) is working to create a one-stop wet weather retrofit or Wetrofit service.

The Wetrofit service will offer streamlined information and services to swiftly reduce neighborhood flooding while enhancing property values.

CNT is working with three communities to pilot the Wetrofit service. Do you own property that frequently floods in Wilmette or Chicago’s Albany Park/North Park or Rogers Park neighborhoods? CNT is recruiting 100 households in each of these neighborhoods to install and test fixes for flooding with a focus on rain gardens.

CNT selected these communities because they all drain into the North Branch of the Chicago River. Problems in one neighborhood can spread to others. For example, high water draining from Wilmette and Rogers Park contributes to flooding in homes downstream in Albany Park and North Park.

We will demonstrate how, with a modest investment, families can protect their property from flooding or sewer backups.

If you are interested in working with CNT to reduce flooding in your property and neighborhood, use the link below to complete our survey, or contact Ryan Wilson at rwilson@cnt.org or (773) 328-7014.

www.surveygizmo.com/s3/888062/household-survey
Reduce Flooding with the Wetrofit Service

Tools for Tackling Flooded Basements and Backyards

- Appropriately placed street restrictors
- Checking and repairing private lateral pipes
- Lateral insurance programs
- Flood insurance riders
- Waterproofing basements
- Installing overhead sewer pumps
- Disconnecting downspouts
- Street retrofitting and porous paving
- Rain barrels and water harvesting
- Bioswales and rain gardens
- Wetlands and park retrofits

“Wetrofit” Jobs

- Basement cleaners
- Plumbers and pipefitters
- Water-proofers
- Landscapers, groundkeepers, and gardeners
- Paving and paver manufacturers and installers
- Maintenance and repair workers
- Rain garden experts
- Green roof experts
- Structural engineers
- Landscape architects
- Pipeline inspectors and repairers
- Nursery workers
- Mold removal specialists
- Civil engineers
- Hydrologic engineers
- Handymen

Key Ingredients of a “Wetrofit” Service Include

- Whole neighborhood approach
- Individual property visits
- Residential, commercial, industrial, public buildings and roads
- Tailor made solutions through a one-stop service
- Efficiency savings through multi-agency coordination and private partnerships
- Investments by property owners
- Potential for new finance models

“Wetrofit” Service At-A-Glance

“CNT’s Water Retrofit service will not only create new green jobs in Illinois and alleviate basement flooding, but will make our state a regional and national model for the United States. Benefits, including economic revitalization and local job training programs, increased property values, and healthier homes and water sources, are important priorities for our great state.”

Governor Pat Quinn, Illinois

Next Steps

1. Identify key players in the public, private, and non-profit sectors interested in the concept
2. Research and develop a number of “test” neighborhood action plans
3. Agree on performance standards and delivery models
4. Pilot in a number of communities
5. Establish service based on lessons learned