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Green infrastructure under Churchill Downs parking lots protects from localized flooding and sewer overflows

LOUISVILLE, KY – Churchill Downs' storied history includes the Kentucky Derby, Kentucky Oaks, and hosting the Breeders' Cup nine times. But the Kentucky institution can also be recognized for its efforts to help maintain safe, clean waterways in Louisville Metro with its participation in Louisville MSD's Green Infrastructure Program.

The track's parking lot renovations include two underground basins, which hold a series of 96-inch corrugated steel pipes underneath both the Derby Museum and Longfield parking areas. The pipes—draining more than 50 acres—act as a storage basin during heavy rainfall events. The basins provide 3 million gallons of stormwater storage, which slowly seeps into the sandy soil under the parking lot into the Ohio River Alluvial Aquifer, keeping stormwater out of the sewer system, reducing sewer overflows and stress on wastewater treatment facilities.

The green infrastructure project exceeds all projections of effectiveness in controlling the amount of stormwater entering the sewer system. The underground basins went into service in April 2019 and have exceeded their capacity only once. As total capacity exceeds the storage amount, the stormwater overflows the underground basins into MSD's combined sewer system.

Additional Facts about the Churchill Downs Infiltration Basins:

- Each basin is the length of a football field and roughly 17 feet underground
- Basins have 3-million-gallon storage capacity total - equivalent to 4.5 Olympic-size swimming pools
- They capture more than 60 million gallons of water each year and will prevent about 12 million gallons of sewer overflow each year
- And are large enough to handle a 2.13" rain event - this is the largest rain event in a typical year of rainfall.
 - This means that, in a typical year, every drop of rain that falls on the 55-acre parking lot will infiltrate back into the ground
- More than 900 trees were planted at Churchill Downs as part of this project

For more information visit LouisvilleMSD.org/Green



LouisvilleMSD

About MSD

The Louisville/Jefferson County Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) works to achieve and maintain clean, environmentally safe waterways for a healthy and vibrant community. The organization's more than 670 employees provide wastewater management, drainage and flood protection services across the 376 square miles of Louisville Metro, and wastewater service in portions of Oldham County. In addition to operating and maintaining Louisville Metro's sewer system, floodwall system, water quality treatment centers and flood pumping stations, MSD invests in hundreds of infrastructure improvement projects each year, plants more than 1,000 trees and other vegetation annually to enhance water filtration and reduce runoff, and provides numerous outreach programs to inform and educate the community about protecting our waterways.