

# 2009 Stormwater Steward



The Athens-Clarke County Stormwater Steward Award recognizes a business, individual, or organization that has gone above and beyond the call of duty in regards to protecting water quality in Athens-Clarke County. You might expect that a business, particularly one who's task is to modify the natural environment, is the entity least likely to be motivated to dedicate time and resources beyond what is required by law to preserve the environment. It is a good sign for the future that this is not the case in Athens; Matthew Tanner of Breedlove Land Planning, Inc. has demonstrated that an attitude of environmental stewardship is always good for business.

When surveyed about what concerns them the most about the environment, by far the most common response is that people are worried that there won't be enough clean water for future generations. The challenge that cities and towns face is encouraging business, industry, and residential groups to change their behaviors and also their vision of the future to include the responsible management of stormwater. We need businesses like Breedlove Land Planning, Inc. in order to make this happen. Beyond just adopting and implementing designs that creatively address the problem of stormwater management, Breedlove Land Planning, Inc. has made it a priority to educate their customers about the problems associated with urban stormwater runoff and its impact on the environment. This educational process allowed the church members of St. James United Methodist Church in Athens to make the best decisions possible regarding protecting the environment while also meeting project goals.

The willingness of Breedlove Land Planning, Inc. to use porous concrete as a building material is also evidence of their commitment to environmental stewardship. Porous concrete allows rain water to infiltrate back into the ground, recharging our water supply. This alternative method reduces the volume of water entering the stormwater system after a storm, helping to prevent flooding and stream bank erosion. The porous concrete is lighter in color and doesn't heat runoff as much as darker asphalts. Cooler water means healthier aquatic ecosystems. The open cell structure of the pervious concrete provides a habitat for aerobic bacteria that break down the pollutants found in parking lots. Because of this, runoff leaving the St. James site is in effect "cleaned" before entering our rivers and streams. In addition, a perimeter forest buffer was planted to reduce the harmful "heat island effect" on this property. Porous concrete has been used in only a small percentage of building projects in Athens-Clarke County, and a successful commercial installation as was done at St. James United Methodist Church is an excellent example to the building community of the effectiveness of using innovative stormwater management methods. Going beyond its traditional function, this parking lot will serve as a community teaching tool. Breedlove Land Planning, Inc. is quickly becoming a community resource that other design and building firms can turn to for advice on green building techniques. The Athens-Clarke County Stormwater Department firmly believes that an attitude of preservation and stewardship is the only way to ensure that there will be enough healthy water for future generations.

**Congratulations to Matthew Tanner of Breedlove Land Planning, Inc. for being selected as the winner of the 2009 Stormwater Steward Award.**

Sincerely,

Natalie White  
**Stormwater Education Specialist**  
**Athens-Clarke County**