



The Beach is Back!

Bradford Beach
Milwaukee County
AECOM



Milwaukee County's Bradford Beach Park along Lake Michigan had experienced numerous beach closings due to high bacterial counts. Public use of the Park continued to decline. Milwaukee County retained Earth Tech AECOM to design a storm water treatment system to improve water quality at Bradford Beach.

An innovative design incorporating sustainable and aesthetic features was successfully implemented in 2008. Infiltration cells along the beach collect storm water, capture contaminants, and improve water quality. Bioretention basins with under drains likewise provided treatment adjacent to the reconstructed parking lot. Rain gardens were constructed in the upper part of the drainage basin located in Lake Park. The rain gardens, planted with native vegetation, promote storm water infiltration.

This naturalized treatment system reduced the construction cost by \$400,000 over conventional methods. Milwaukee County received financial backing from Miller Brewing for beach grooming equipment, other donations to fund life guards, and have contracted with a local restaurateur to operate food and bar service at the bath house.

Bradford Beach is restored to its former glory as the crown jewel in the Milwaukee County Park System. The public has embraced the improvements to the park and usage has skyrocketed including volleyball tournaments, swimming, roller blading and simply enjoying the lake beauty. The beach is back and now a destination for people of all ages from near and far.

