

Shedd Aquarium Chicago, IL

Installed by Aquascape, Inc. in April 2009

Aquascape, Inc. was commissioned by the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago to construct a 3000-gallon Pondless® Waterfall adjacent to its outside dining terrace.

Project Overview

The 80-foot waterfall and stream feature replicates a watershed and can be replenished with rainwater that runs off the terrace into a series of 50-gallon rain barrels. Three dramatic, weathered limestone waterfalls flow into a 3000-gallon underground reservoir constructed with 100 AquaBlox® D-Raintanks®. The 12-foot high self-sustaining water feature is situated on a slope angled toward Lake Michigan. The reservoir at the bottom of the waterfall and stream helps to capture some of the stormwater run-off that would otherwise flow into the lake. Two Tsurumi 9PL pumps push the stored water up and over the re-circulating waterfall, providing filtration, aeration and habitat, thereby improving water quality.

The self-sustaining water feature provides a riparian zone, which is instrumental in water quality for surface run-off. By incorporating the sub-surface reservoir, rainwater run-off is better managed and provides an aesthetic waterfall feature at the same time.

Visitors to the Shedd Aquarium, as well as passers-by on the lakefront's paved bike path can interact with the water feature. A bridge traverses the stream from the dining terrace to the grass beyond. Native plants soften the edges of the rocky feature and provide a landing spot for birds, butterflies, and bees.



Excavating the waterfall area.



Laying liner for the 80-foot waterfall.



Patio installed while excavation begins.



AquaBlox® D-Raintanks® set at foot of self-sustaining waterfall.



Finished waterfall adjacent to terrace.



View of the water feature and the skyline.