

Jubilee harnesses the rain

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April showers might mean May flowers but an innovative approach to water storage will help keep the buds blooming year round at Royal Jubilee Hospital.

The rainwater management system being installed at Royal Jubilee is the only one of its kind on Vancouver Island and, possibly, the entire country, said David Leadbetter, Vancouver Island Health Authority facilities director.

On Monday, crews from Campbell Construction, the lead contractor in the construction of the new RJH patient care centre, began installing the first of nine cisterns that will collect rainwater and storm water from the Richmond Avenue site. The cisterns will be assembled in groups of three and will have a combined capacity of 273,000 litres, Leadbetter said.



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David Leadbetter at Royal Jubilee Monday as the first of nine rain collection cisterns is installed.

The total irrigation requirement for the facility is 241,150 litres, VIHA stated in a news release.

The cisterns will collect reclaimed storm water and rooftop run-off and discharge filtered water into bioswales. From there, some of the water will be diverted into decorative ponds and water features located on the hospital grounds.

"We will be able to landscape with an extensive array of plants because of

the free water," Leadbetter added.

A major feature of the innovation is that it will not draw any power from the B.C. Hydro grid as all power for the process will be generated by wind turbines on line with the hospital's ventilation system. The system is part of the LEEDS certification process and is designed to minimize the flow of run-off from the hospital grounds into nearby Bowker Creek.

Bowker Creek initiative coordinator Tanis Douglas praised the VIHA initiative. "It's an example of what we need to see more of in terms of managing rainwater run-off," she said.

While the cost of the water recovery system is significant, there is no profit incentive for the health authority, said Leadbetter.

"There is no return on an investment of more than \$400,000," he said. "It's just the right thing to do."

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