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Perfect weather graces grand opening of Greenfield water playground

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GREENFIELD — Children of all ages cooled off on a steamy Friday afternoon as temperatures climbed into the upper 80s, leaping through streams of water shooting up from the ground and shrieking with excitement as buckets above their heads repeatedly filled with and dumped water.

Music and laughter could be heard down the block as the kids, along with their parents, celebrated the grand opening of the new Hillside Park splash pad Friday afternoon. The ceremony coincided with the Hillside Block Party and featured a bounce house, free hot dogs and games.

“We’re gonna get wet, we’re gonna have fun and enjoy our new splash pad,” Recreation Director Christy Moore announced to the crowd of several hundred as she, along with Mayor William Martin, pushed the button to activate the water park for the first time publicly.

Hugo Taggert, a 5-year-old from Greenfield, who was there with his parents and 7-year-old brother Asa, said the overhead buckets were his favorite part of the park.

“I think a water feature is a great addition to the Greenfield parks,” his mother, Lydia, said. “We were looking forward to this.”

Phil Gent watched from the sidelines as his twin sons, Brandon and Chris, both 6, ran through the water. He said he particularly liked that the 20-by-70-foot splash pad runs on a timer and must be activated by pushing a button.

“I think they did a great job having it on a timer so it doesn’t waste water,” he said.

Brandon Gent said he loves the new area, especially the buckets.

“It dumps, like, a gallon of water!” he exclaimed.

The park will be open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. through Labor Day, according to Moore. The project was funded by a \$200,000 grant from the state’s Our Common Backyard Grant program, and Town Council approved \$50,000, which was what the town needed to match the grant.

Jessica Castine brought her 16-month-old son, Owen, to the opening. Although he had to be carried into the water at first, after a few minutes he was smiling and playing in one of the fountains on his own.

“I think it’s great,” Castine said. “It’s nice to have something nice in our community that I can bring Owen out to. Plus, to meet other kids in the community is good.”

Jaydon Grazick, 9, said his father lives right across the street and is looking forward to coming back throughout the summer.

“I think it’s awesome,” he said. “It’s not too far from my house.”

Moore said she thought the opening was successful, adding the event had about 375 RSVPs on Facebook.

“It’s a wonderful turnout and the weather is fabulous,” she said. “We’ve got people both young and old.”

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Jaydon Grazick, 9, of Greenfield, stands under one of the water jets at the new splash pad at Hillside Park in Greenfield.



Children use a directional spray of water at the new splash pad at Hillside Park in Greenfield on Friday.