

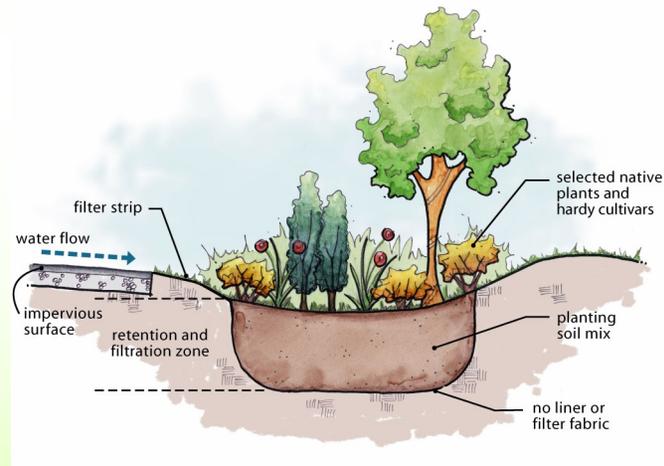
How to Create a Rain Garden

Designing and planting a rain garden is much like creating any other perennial garden, with a few unique differences.

- ◆ The garden must be located where runoff can be diverted into it, at least 10 feet away from building foundations and septic systems.
- ◆ A shallow, saucer-shaped depression is created in the garden to hold rain as it soaks in. The garden should be about 20-30% of the area from which it is receiving runoff.
- ◆ Soil replacement and additional preparations are sometimes needed for success. A good soil mix for rain gardens is 50-60% sand, 20-30% topsoil, and 20-30% compost.
- ◆ Species of perennial plants and shrubs native to our region are recommended, as they are adapted to local conditions and will not need extra care once they are established. Plant flood tolerant species in the center and drought tolerant ones around the edges. Berry-bearing and nectar-producing plants attract and nourish wildlife.
- ◆ A mulch of shredded hardwood is an integral part of your rain garden. It keeps the soil moist and ready to soak up rain, and makes your garden low-maintenance.

What is a Rain Garden?

A rain garden is a shallow depression planted with perennial native plants that are tolerant of both dry and wet conditions. Rain gardens capture runoff from impervious surface areas such as rooftops and driveways and allow it to seep slowly into the ground. Most importantly, rain gardens help preserve nearby streams and ponds by reducing the amount of polluted runoff and filtering pollutants.



Fertilizer,
Landscaping,
Yard Waste



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DO's and DON'Ts

DO: Reduce or discontinue use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides and herbicides. Consider natural or slow-release alternatives instead that feed plants slowly and evenly over the growing season. No matter the treatment, always apply as directed and avoid overuse.

DON'T: Unnecessarily treat your lawn with multiple treatments of nutrient-heavy fertilizers.

DO: Turn off automatic sprinklers during a rainstorm to reduce risk of overwatering your yard and consider low-water vegetation and landscaping. Irrigate in the morning when plants can use the water rather than at night.

DON'T: Overwater your lawn, apply fertilizer during heavy precipitation times, or use lawn treatments in excess.

DO: Pick up pet waste frequently and dispose of properly.

DON'T: Rake pet and lawn waste into streets and allow debris to travel down our stormwater drains: this waste goes directly into our urban waterways.

DO: Wash your car in designated car washes with appropriate drainage systems.

DON'T: Wash your vehicle on your yard/ driveway/street and allow the soap, grime, and metals to travel into our stormwater system and waterways. This is harmful to fish and other aquatic life.

Where does the stormwater runoff go?



Q: How do nutrient-heavy fertilizers and other lawn care products effect stream ecology?

A: Excess nutrients in our waterways can lead to algae overgrowth, which can alter fish habitat and the natural ecology of our streams, rivers and lakes. Also, algae growth does not make for appealing water to recreate in or drink from. Pesticides and herbicides can also have a detrimental effect on our waterways and the wildlife that lives and depends on them, such as fish, birds, deer, and bears to name just a few. These treatments can also cause potential harm to us and our pets – always read and follow pesticide label instructions. Don't overuse pesticides and just treat the problem areas, not the entire yard.

Q: Are there waterway friendly alternatives to chemical lawn care treatments?

A: YES! Many local landscape companies and lawn care retailers offer less nutrient heavy alternatives to traditional fertilizers and pesticides. These products may include slow-release fertilizers, organic fertilizers, compost or mulch. Just like with traditional lawn products, it is important to follow the recommended application rates and not over-apply.