

RAIN GARDENS: A LANDSCAPING FEATURE THAT REDUCES STORM WATER IMPACT

Rain gardens are a natural, low-cost, and low-maintenance way to intercept storm water run off from roofs, driveways, and other impervious surfaces on your property before the water enters the storm water system.

Rain gardens are landscaped depressions that receive stormwater runoff and allow the runoff to slowly infiltrate to the groundwater table. Infiltration is just another way of saying that the water soaks into the ground rather than running off carrying topsoil, fertilizer, herbicides and other pollutants into the storm water system and into our creeks and rivers.



Rain gardens can be as simple as routing your gutter downspouts away from the driveway or street to natural area of your property. Or they can be as complex as collecting runoff from your property into a small constructed wetland with native plants that are a hardy mix of grasses, small shrubs, bog plants and self-seeding perennials creating a feature in your yard!

Rain gardens utilize one of the basic tools of storm water management: infiltration. Infiltration is a term for what happens naturally when rain water is absorbed into the ground rather than running off impervious surfaces like roads, parking lots, and roofs. Utilizing the process of infiltration flooding problems are greatly reduced if not eliminated; pollutants from runoff are not washed directly into streams and rivers, but are filtered out before they reach groundwater; and is a natural, low-maintenance, low-cost, and basic solution.

Typical rain garden installation requires a suitable area located between the rainwater source and its destination that is at least 10 feet from a home or building and is either a depressed area or an area where water flows naturally. The soil should be well drained or an appropriate soil mix of sand, top soil, and compost that lets water drain away and does not create a standing water condition. Use native plants that are a hardy mix of grasses, small shrubs, and self-seeding perennials that are both wet and drought tolerant.



For information on how to construct a rain garden, see the following web site:

Carolina Clear, Clemson Public Service - <https://www.clemson.edu/extension/raingarden/>