

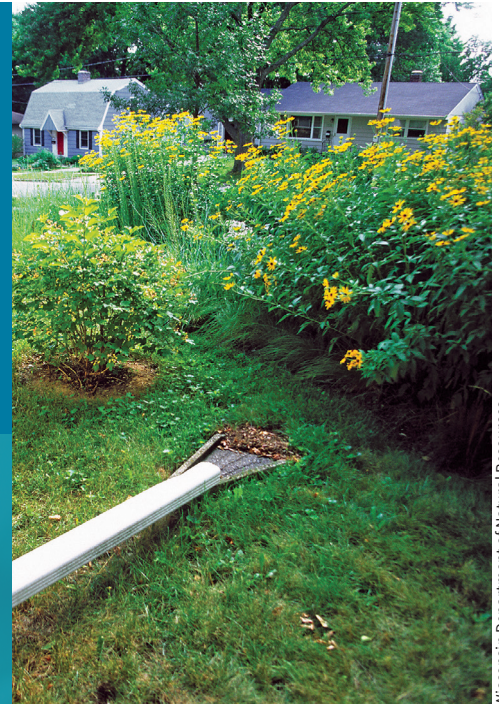


Rain Garden

A rain garden is a planted area specially designed to slow storm water runoff and allow it more time to soak into the soil. In addition to water control, rain gardens offer other benefits like wildlife and pollinator habitat, as well as pleasing aesthetics.

Provides: Food, water, shelter

Supports: Birds (seed-eating and insectivorous), mammals, reptiles and amphibians



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A **common size** for residential rain gardens is between 100 and 300 square feet.

Implementation Steps:

- 1 Inventory your Property** – This includes calculating how much water runoff you expect from your roof or sump pump and identifying the flow of runoff through your yard. The Wisconsin DNR publication in the “Other Resources” section (see back page) explains how to make these calculations.
- 2 Pick your Plants** – Native perennial plants are often the best choice for rain gardens (wetland or wet prairie wildflowers and grasses are popular and well-suited for rain gardens). Young plants, either from seed or plugs (depending on the species) tend to fare better than larger, translocated plants. Publications in the “Other Resources” section offer plant selection suggestions. Native plant nurseries, Extension staff, and local biologists/ecologists are additional resources that can help you make plant selections appropriate for your rain garden.
- 3 Construct your rain garden** –
 - Step 1:** Dig a shallow depression with a level bottom as large as you like at least 10-20 ft. away from your (or your neighbor’s) house.
 - Step 2:** Direct your downspout (from roof runoff) or sump pump outlet to your rain garden by digging a shallow canal or routing it through a buried section of PVC pipe.
 - Step 3:** Plant native plants, which will need to be watered every other day for the first few weeks until they establish.

(Implementation Steps continued)

- 4 Maintain your rain garden** – Some weeding will be necessary in the beginning, but once your rain garden has established itself, regular maintenance should be limited. Do not apply lawn fertilizers too close to the rain garden as they tend to promote weed growth.

Additional Tip:

- For non-Do-It-Yourselfers, consider contracting a landscaper. As rain gardens grow in popularity, many skilled landscapers are starting to design and build rain gardens.



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Other Resources:

- Rain garden process flow chart
www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/raingarden_design/downloads/RainGardenProcessChart.pdf
- Rain Garden Design Templates – definition of rain garden, templates and information for each step of the process
www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/raingarden_design
- Wisconsin DNR – includes links to a homeowner's how-to manual and a link to another website on how to build a rain garden
dnr.wi.gov/topic/Stormwater/raingarden



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