

## What is a Rain Garden?

A Rain Garden is a shallow depression in a yard, planted with a variety of deep-rooted native flowers, shrubs and grasses that "don't mind getting their feet wet". The garden is designed to collect and hold rainwater from downspouts, driveways, and sidewalks for a *short time*, allowing the water to slowly seep back into the ground. When planted with the right types of plants, rain gardens also attract birds, butterflies and other wildlife.



## How Do Rain Gardens Work?

A Rain Garden receives water from impervious (hard) surfaces such as rooftops, sidewalks, driveways and patios. The shallow depression of the garden holds the water so it can slowly infiltrate back into the soil as the plants, mulch and soil naturally remove pollutants from the runoff. Many pollutants will be filtered out and break down in the soil over time. By capturing storm water, Rain Gardens reduce the amount of runoff pollutants collected and flowing into stormdrains and out to our nearby streams, rivers and lakes.

## **Why Build a Rain Garden?**

- Conserve municipal water resources by reducing the need for irrigation
- Create a natural infiltration of rainwater into the soil
- Reduce runoff of fertilizers, pesticides, and other chemicals from washing off your lawn, rooftop and driveway
- Improve local water quality
- Reduce garden maintenance
- Increase garden enjoyment

## **Where Are The Best Places to Locate a Rain Garden?**

Rain Gardens are best located in natural depressions or low lying areas where water flows naturally from a downspout, driveway, patio or sidewalk. Typically, rain gardens should be placed at least 10 feet away from foundations to prevent flooding problems.

It is *not* recommended that Rain Gardens are planted over a septic system, close to foundations or where the seasonal high water table is within 24 inches of the soil surface.

## **Will a Rain Garden Attract Mosquitoes?**

Water should stand in a rain garden no longer than 24 hours after the rain stops. Mosquitoes cannot complete their breeding cycle in this length of time, so a rain garden should not increase mosquito populations.