

## FOR PARTICIPANTS

### STORMWATER TOOL

# Rain Garden

## What is a Rain Garden?

- A rain garden is a shallow, planted depression that absorbs the water that flows from your roof or any hard surface, allowing it to drain directly into the soil.
- Rain gardens are one of the simplest and most effective ways to “green” your landscape and manage stormwater.
- A rain garden will reduce stormwater pollution, replenish the groundwater supply and provide a self-irrigating landscape!

## Benefits of a Rain Garden

- Create an attractive and unique landscape feature.
- Slow down stormwater runoff and filter pollution.
- Prevent runoff from polluting our local rivers and streams.
- Create habitat for birds and butterflies.

## Caring for Your Rain Garden

- Water the rain garden frequently (once per week for the first month or so). Once established, it should need little to no additional watering.
- Weed and prune as you would any garden.
- Do not be afraid to move plants around if you think they would do better in drier or wetter parts of the garden.
- Do not plant edible food in a rain garden. Stormwater running into the garden may carry dirt and debris not suitable for edible plants. In addition, urban soils should be tested before being used for growing edibles.



*This shallow, planted depression absorbs the water that flows from a roof or patio.*



For more information, frequently asked questions and price points, go to [www.pwdraincheck.org](http://www.pwdraincheck.org)

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# Rain Garden (CONTINUED)

## Keep in Mind

- Rain gardens should be sloped away from the home and neighboring properties.
- They should also be located approximately 10 ft. from the foundation of the home and cannot be located above underground utilities.
- Soil conditions must be appropriate; the contractor will complete an infiltration test to determine this.
- Plant selection options will vary based on the location of the garden and the availability of plant species.
- A rain garden could be planted following concrete removal if the assessor can verify the soil conditions.

## What Will It Cost?

- If you choose a rain garden, a landscaping contractor will visit your home to provide an estimate based on your property.
- Most gardens cost about \$25–40/sq. ft.
- PWD will pay \$22/sq. ft. up to a maximum of \$2,500.
- The homeowner pays the remainder of the total cost.

## Next Steps:

- Go to [www.pwdraincheck.org](http://www.pwdraincheck.org) and visit the “Pick Your Project” section to see if this tool is right for your property. Then sign up for a free workshop.

## Common Rain Garden Plants

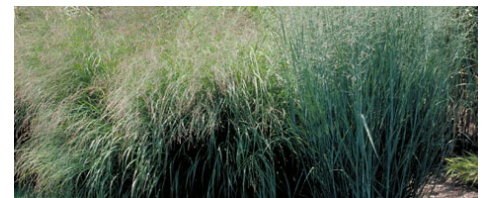
For a more complete list of sample rain garden plants, visit: <http://raingardenalliance.org/planting/plantlist>



**Brown-Eyed Susan**  
(*Rudbeckia triloba*)  
Image: Illinois Wildflowers



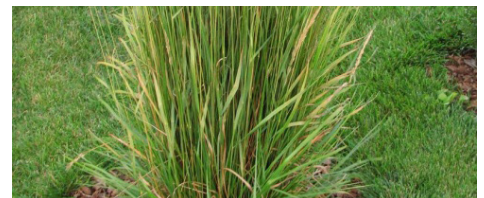
**Little Joe Pye Weed**  
(*Eupatorium dubium*)  
Image: The Hiker's Notebook / William Needham



**Switchgrass**  
(*Panicum virgatum*)  
Image: Nature for Cities



**Goldsturm**  
(*Rudbeckia fulgida*)  
Image: Falling Water Designs



**Small-reed or Reedgrass**  
(*Calamagrostis*)  
Image: Environmental Management Landscape, Inc, Chris Matson, 2010

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