

RAIN GARDENS FOR YOUR HOME & LANDSCAPE

As the Pacific Northwest heads into our usual dry summer, we urge you to consider installing a rain garden. So what is a rain garden and why should you create one?

A rain garden is a garden designed to soak up rain and runoff from your roof, driveway, and lawn. It is a shallow depression or excavation (not a wetland), generally 4" to 8" deep, that is planted with wildflowers and other native vegetation rather than lawn.

A rain garden, which absorbs about 30% more water than conventional lawn, is one of many tools or strategies used to lessen the amount of storm water runoff .

We know that during wet periods, excessive stormwater runoff erodes and degrades stream channels, and salmon eggs and juveniles may be swept away. Flooding and drainage problems occur, and our storm water systems may become overloaded, resulting in release of untreated sewage and other pollutants.

In addition, rain gardens provide a way in which residents can personally contribute to cleaner water, healthier fish and wildlife populations, and a more beautiful and functional environment. Though each rain garden seems small, collectively they would help to restore a portion of the land's ability to hold or retain water to perform ecological services. For example, freshwater would be captured and infiltrated to recharge groundwater/ drinking water supplies, to sustain vegetation and wildlife, and to provide adequate flows in streams during dry spells, which sustains fish and other aquatic life.