

Rain Gardens and Water Quality



Silver Creek Watershed Improvement Project funded by a Nonpoint Source Section 319 Grant from IDEM Clark County Soil and Water Conservation District

Why Install a Rain Garden?

Benefits of a Rain Garden

- Increases the amount of water filtering into the ground.
- Reduces the amount of stormwater and pollutants going to area streams, improving water quality.
- Rooted plants stabilize soil to prevent erosion during large storm events.
- Requires little mowing, weeding or chemical application once established
- Provides valuable wildlife habitat.
- Helps sustain adequate flows in streams during dry spells.
- Improve or eliminate wet spots in the yard.

Wisdom for Rain Gardens

Rain gardens will not remove permanent stands of water (pool or pond) in a yard. However, water gardens can be designed to incorporate such a feature.

Do not locate rain gardens over septic systems or near wells.

Rain gardens do not have to be elaborate or overly large.

Combining a rain barrel with a soaker hose to the rain garden can help spread rainfall over longer periods of time, further slowing the flow of stormwater and increasing its infiltration.

Rain gardens are gardens containing flowering plants and grasses (preferably native species of both) that can survive soil soaked with water from rain storms. However they are not gardens that have standing water. Rain Gardens collect and slow stormwater run off and increase its infiltration into the soil. These attractive gardens help reduce the rapid flow of stormwater from homes and businesses to storm drains and thus protect streams and lakes from pollutants that are washed from house roofs and paved areas. Compared to a patch of conventional lawn, a rain garden allows about 30 percent more water to soak into the ground.

The rain garden does not require much space and can fit into existing landscapes or made into any shape. Rain

gardens should be placed in a location to collect the runoff as a rain event occurs. To make your rain garden effective, strategic placement next to hard surfaces such as alleys, sidewalks, driveways and under gutters are good choices. The location should be at least 10 feet away from your home to avoid a flooded basement or leaky foundation. You may think that a location where water already ponds in your yard would be appropriate, but it is NOT. The soil in this location does not have adequate infiltration properties. The depth should not be greater than six inches because of the possibility of retaining water longer than 96 hours, which would make the area prone to mosquito breeding. A good rule of thumb is that the garden should be at least twice as long as it is

wide. After planting, the maintenance cost of a rain garden is minimal. Weeding of grasses and non-natives is the only real maintenance needed. Cover the garden with shredded mulch to help reduce weeds and retain moisture. The other advantage of rain gardens is that they are rarely in need of watering. Each rain garden may seem small, but collectively they produce substantial environmental benefits.



Native Plants Key to Rain Gardens

It is always recommended to use native plants. Native plants are best because they are adapted for the local climate and once, established, do not need extra water or fertilizer. Many are deep rooted, allowing them to survive droughts. They also provide habitat and food for native wildlife and they at-

tract diverse native pollinators. The focus of a rain garden is flowers, although some grasses and shrubs may be used. The garden will have various zones so different kinds of plants are required. The center and deepest part of the garden will support the very wet to wet-loving plants. Drier types of vegeta-

tion can be used the as you move out to the rim of the garden. Don't forget to consider the sunlight, moisture and soil requirements during plant selection. Think about a color scheme and visual interest for each season of the year. Remember to look up if you're planting trees to avoid power lines.

Inside Story Headline

This story can fit 150-200 words.

One benefit of using your newsletter as a promotional tool is that you can reuse content from other marketing materials, such as press releases, market studies, and reports.

While your main goal of distributing a newsletter might be to sell your product or service, the key to a successful newsletter is making it useful to your readers.

A great way to add useful con-

tent to your newsletter is to develop and write your own articles, or include a calendar of upcoming events or a special offer that promotes a new product.

You can also research articles or find “filler” articles by accessing the World Wide Web. You can write about a variety of topics but try to keep your articles short.

Much of the content you put in your newsletter can also be used for your Web site. Micro-

soft Publisher offers a simple way to convert your newsletter to a Web publication. So, when you’re finished writing your newsletter, convert it to a Web site and post it.



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Inside Story Headline

This story can fit 100-150 words.

The subject matter that appears in newsletters is virtually endless. You can include stories that focus on current technologies or innovations in your field.

You may also want to note business or economic trends, or make predictions for your customers or clients.

If the newsletter is distributed internally, you might comment upon new procedures or improvements to the business. Sales figures or earnings will show how your business is growing.

Some newsletters include a column that is updated every issue, for instance, an advice column, a book review, a letter from the president, or an edito-

rial. You can also profile new employees or top customers or vendors.

“To catch the reader’s attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here.”

Inside Story Headline

This story can fit 75-125 words.

Selecting pictures or graphics is an important part of adding content to your newsletter.

Think about your article and ask yourself if the picture supports or enhances the message you’re trying to convey. Avoid selecting images that appear to be out of context.

Microsoft Publisher includes thousands of clip art images from which you can choose and import into your newsletter. There are also several tools you can use to draw shapes and symbols.

Once you have chosen an image, place it close to the article. Be sure to place the caption of the image near the image.



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Organization

*Silver Creek Watershed Improvement Project funded by a Nonpoint Source
Section 319 Grant from IDEM
Clark County Soil and Water Conservation District*

Primary Business Address

Your Address Line 2

Your Address Line 3

Your Address Line 4

Phone: 555-555-5555

Fax: 555-555-5555

E-mail: someone@example.com

Your business tag line here.

We're on the Web!

example.microsoft.com

This would be a good place to insert a short paragraph about your organization. It might include the purpose of the organization, its mission, founding date, and a brief history. You could also include a brief list of the types of products, services, or programs your organization offers, the geographic area covered (for example, western U.S. or European markets), and a profile of the types of customers or members served.

It would also be useful to include a contact name for readers who want more information about the organization.

Back Page Story Headline

This story can fit 175-225 words.

If your newsletter is folded and mailed, this story will appear on the back. So, it's a good idea to make it easy to read at a glance.

A question and answer session is a good way to quickly capture the attention of readers. You can either compile questions that you've received since the last edition or you can summarize some generic questions that are frequently asked about your organization.

A listing of names and titles of managers in your organization is a good way to give your newsletter a personal touch. If your

organization is small, you may want to list the names of all employees.

If you have any prices of standard products or services, you can include a listing of those here. You may want to refer your readers to any other forms of communication that you've created for your organization.

You can also use this space to remind readers to mark their calendars for a regular event, such as a breakfast meeting for vendors every third Tuesday of the month, or a biannual charity auction.

If space is available, this is

a good place to insert a clip art image or some other graphic.



Caption describing picture or graphic.