

Ready. Set. Grow!

Okay, so it doesn't happen that fast. But remember, **be patient**. Your efforts really will make a BIG difference and positively impact the environment. Your native plants will take a couple of years to get established before your Rain Garden will be the full-blooming beauty equal to any garden in the area.

Caring for Your Rain Garden — A Checklist:

◇ Weeding

- ◆ It seems to be easier after a rain or after you water.
- ◆ Two or more times a year, and remember not to pull your native plants next to the pin flags.

◇ Watering — Has it been more than three weeks since the last rainfall?

- ◆ Water your garden with a sprinkler until soaked.

◇ Mulching (spring)

- ◆ Check to see if any hardpan is developing.
- ◆ Adding 3 to 4 inches of mulch will keep weeding down.

◇ Mowing — Is the thatch or dead-plant material keeping the spring growth from coming up?

- ◆ Mow in the early spring or late fall on the highest wheel setting on your mower.

◇ Maintaining

- ◆ Keep your native plants healthy! Keep trash, dirt and soil out, and remember no fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides are needed.



For more information, contact the JFNew office nearest you or visit our website at www.jfnew.com

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Before



After

RAIN GARDENS

A Simple Guide to Maintenance
for
Function and Beauty

Improving Water Quality One Raindrop at a Time

Presented by

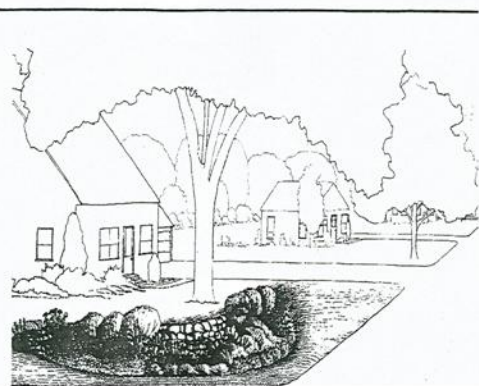


Full-Service Ecological Solutions™

Your Rain Garden

When rain falls on natural areas, such as a forest or meadow, it is slowed down, filtered by soil and plants, and allowed to soak back into the ground. When rain falls on solid or hard surfaces, such as rooftops, roads and parking lots, rain doesn't soak into the ground, and stormwater runoff is created. Stormwater runoff picks up pollution such as fertilizers, pesticides, sediments, motor oil, litter, pet and yard waste, and heat —yes, even heat can be a pollutant — and delivers these pollutants directly to local streams and rivers.

A Rain Garden is a shallow depression in the ground that collects a few inches of water after a storm. The garden helps the stormwater runoff from your road, roof and/or yard to slowly soak back into the earth. Rain gardens capture the pollutants that are in the collected stormwater runoff, and they keep the pollutants from flowing into the stream next to your house. Plants and soil work together to absorb and filter these pollutants, and they return cleaner, cooler water through the ground to your nearby stream. Because water is only in the Rain Garden for a day or two, it won't become a breeding ground for mosquitoes.



Typical Rain Garden Layout



Residential Rain Garden With wall or path

Caring for Your Rain Garden

Caring for your Rain Garden is similar to any traditional landscaping area. During the first few years, there will be varying degrees of weeding, watering, mulching, mowing and cleaning involved. However, unlike other gardens, no fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides are needed.

Weeding

It is important to weed regularly during the first two years while your native plants are establishing. At first, your Rain Garden's newly planted native species may have a tough time competing with weeds and fast-growing tree seedlings. However, don't worry. Once the native plants become established, less weeding will be required. It's best to only hand-weed so you won't disrupt the new plants or the mulch.

We recommend mulching your Rain Garden to help keep the weeds out. Placing pin flags next to your native plants when they are first planted will help you easily identify them from the weeds. You want to make sure you compost your removed weeds so they don't re-seed or start growing again in your Rain Garden.

Watering

To ensure healthy growth, the native plants in your Rain Garden may need to be watered during the first two to three years as they become established. Watering should only be necessary if it doesn't rain during the summer for more than three weeks and the ground is very dry. Once established, plants should only be watered during long periods of drought. Any type of garden sprinkler on a standard garden hose will work, and remember to soak the ground thoroughly.

Mulching

Mulching helps keep the soil moist, allowing for greater amount of stormwater runoff ground infiltration. Un-mulched surfaces within your Rain Garden could lead to soil hardpan, a condition in which the soil surface becomes hard and pavement-like, keeping water from penetrating the ground. Mulching also protects your native plants and reduces weed growth. You should check your Rain Garden each spring to see if it needs to be re-mulched with 3 to 4 inches of hardwood mulch. Use hardwood pine bark mulch when needed.

Mowing

After four or five years, thatch, which are dead native plants that have fallen over, can stop your new growth from coming up in the spring. We recommend mowing at the highest level possible on your mower, and thatch all the material out for your compost pile. Only mow in early spring or late fall so your native plants can adjust to the growing season.

Maintaining

Your Rain Garden should be regularly inspected for trash, dirt and soil accumulation, and the overall health and thickness of your native plants. Routinely check your Rain Garden after each major rain—at least an inch or more—or at least four times per year between March and November. Debris, trash, dirt and soil accumulation left in your Rain Garden could stop your native plants from growing healthy or destroy them altogether. Remove the debris and trash, and put it in your trash receptacle for city pick up. You may need to use a shovel to dig the soil and dirt out. If you can, spread it in a thin layer around the Rain Garden as long as it won't hurt the plants.



Residential Rain Garden