

What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is rain water or snow melt that runs off of driveways, roofs, roads, and parking lots rather than soaking in to the ground. As stormwater flows across these hard surfaces, it collects automotive fluids, fertilizers, pesticides, pet waste, and sediments. These pollutants are conveyed, untreated, to the nearest waterway through the network of gutters, ditches, and pipes referred to as the stormwater system.

What is Green Infrastructure?

Green Infrastructure is an approach to managing stormwater that protects water quality by soaking water into the ground rather than creating runoff. Rain gardens and rain barrels are popular examples of green infrastructure that can easily be installed by homeowners.



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Want More Info?

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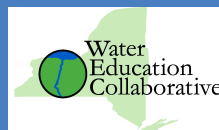
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Make Your Home Fit For An H2O Hero!

Creating Green Infrastructure
For Your Home



Rain Gardens

A rain garden is a planted, shallow depression that is designed to receive runoff from your roof or driveway and let it soak into the ground. Rain gardens are not ponds and are generally dry unless there has been a recent rain.

Proper design and placement of a rain garden is important to insure that the runoff can easily be conveyed to the garden and will be quickly absorbed. Compost is generally added to the garden to increase the rate at which water soaks in to the ground. A rain garden should be placed at least 10' from the house to avoid any impacts to the foundation.

Native plants that are attractive and adapted to highly variable amounts of water are a popular choice for rain gardens. Once established, a rain garden is very easy to maintain requiring only occasional weeding comparable to any other landscape feature.

For detailed information about how to design a rain garden, visit www.H2OHero.org



Rain Barrels

Rain barrels are designed to collect and store the runoff from your roof for later use in your garden or landscaping. Rain barrels and cisterns have been around for centuries and are becoming increasingly popular as an easy, low cost method of reducing stormwater runoff and protecting water quality.

A properly designed rain barrel includes an adequately sized overflow directed to an area which can safely receive this runoff. Find out how much rainwater comes off your roof at www.H2OHero.org.



To learn more about how to get a rain barrel for your home visit www.H2OHero.org and click on "Get Involved."

Downspout Disconnects

In some neighborhoods, roof downspouts are connected to the stormwater system at the street. The purpose of this design was to prevent standing water issues. Unfortunately, this arrangement can contribute to flooding downstream and impact water quality.

Disconnecting the downspouts from your roof, and directing the water to a rain barrel, rain garden, or suitable lawn area, will reduce the amount of water that enters the stormwater system. However, before you disconnect any downspouts, it's important to give proper consideration to local building codes and how the runoff will be managed so that it does not result in standing water or impact your home or adjacent properties. Runoff should be conveyed at least 10' from the foundation to a flat location with enough space to properly soak it into the ground.

