



RAIN GARDENS AND OUR WATERWAYS

Educational Flyer on Rain Gardens



What is a rain garden? A rain garden is a low landscaped area designed to capture rainwater.

How do pollutants enter our waterways? When rain lands it travels from your property to a stormwater network of ditches, swales and storm drains. As it travels on the ground it collects any pollutants in its path. Pollutants encountered include oils, pet waste, litter, fertilizer, pesticides, dirt, leaves, grass clippings etc. The water carries the

pollutants through the stormwater network to the lagoon or ocean. The pollutants decrease the quality of the receiving water body and can contribute to fish kills, algae blooms and beach closures.

How does a rain garden protect our waterways? A rain garden is designed to collect rainwater and prevent it from reaching the stormwater system. This stops the water from carrying pollutants to the lagoon and ocean. The garden captures the rain and allows plants and soils to absorb the water. Natural processes in the garden can then reduce or eliminate certain pollutants.

HOW TO GET STARTED

- 1) **Select a Location:** Your rain garden should be at least 10' away from your home. Watch your yard's rainfall during a storm and try positioning your garden near where water naturally flows. The best locations are often existing low areas of the yard or areas near gutter downspouts.
- 2) **Layout:** Use stakes and string to create the size and shape of your garden. Average rain gardens are 100-300 square feet.
- 3) **Prep:** Dig out the garden so that it is 4" - 8" deep after you add any planting soil. Slope the sides down towards the middle at a slope of 2% - 25%. After digging, add planting soil as desired.
- 4) **Plant:** Select your plants and plant them. Mature, native, moisture tolerant plants are ideal choices.
- 5) **Embellish:** Add gravel, mulch or an alternate ground cover if desired. Add yard ornaments, bird feeders or accent boulders if desired.



WAY TO GO! Celebrate a job well done. You have added character to your home while protecting the beautiful waters of Vero Beach!

For More Information on Stormwater
Visit: <http://arcg.is/1fPzLW>