

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How much does a rain garden cost? A 50 to 200 square foot residential rain garden can cost anywhere from \$3 - \$15 per square foot depending on the size and number of plants and the use of optional landscape features such as retaining walls, edging, etc.

What are other benefits of rain gardens besides water quality improvements and reducing community flooding risks? Rain gardens provide many additional benefits such as adding beauty and value to neighborhoods and providing wildlife habitat to attract beneficial birds, butterflies, and dragonflies.

Do rain gardens breed mosquitos? No. Rain gardens hold water for no longer than 48 hours--far shorter than the 7 days of standing water needed to breed mosquitos. In between rainfalls the rain gardens are dry.

Do rain gardens require maintenance? Yes. Like any perennial flower garden, rain gardens need to be watered the first year and weeded semi-annually. Filling in bare spots with mulch is also recommended.

Why use native prairie plants? Prairie plants native to Minnesota have deep roots that help break up compacted soils, even clay, to infiltrate water. They are also naturally drought, flood, and pest resistant.

The background graphic shows the difference between the roots of lawn turf (far left) and native prairie plants. Some native plant roots reach 16 ft. deep!

(Graphic by Heidi Natura, Conservation Research Institute)

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Storm Water Department
540 West Hills Circle
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CITY OF OWATONNA RAIN GARDEN COST SHARE PROGRAM



Photo: City of Maplewood, MN



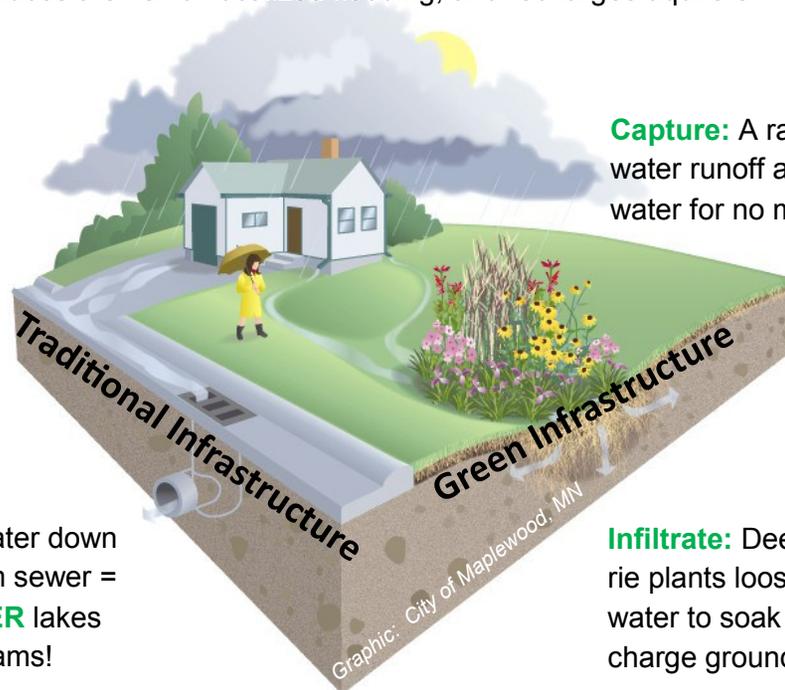
“Clean H₂Owatonna” is the City of Owatonna’s Stormwater Management initiative to improve the quality of our water resources and protect them from harmful pollutants.

Owatonna Rain Garden Cost Share Program

WHAT IS A RAIN GARDEN?

A **RAIN GARDEN** is a dry depression in the landscape that is planted like a garden and allows rainwater to infiltrate into the ground rather than run into storm sewers where it flows untreated into our lakes and waterways.

Allowing rainwater runoff to soak into the ground improves the water quality of our rivers and lakes, reduces the risk of localized flooding, and recharges aquifers.



Capture: A rain garden catches water runoff and holds standing water for no more than 48 hours.

Filter: In the soil, microbes break down pollutants and nutrients washed in by the rain.

Infiltrate: Deep-rooted native prairie plants loosen the soil, allowing water to soak in quickly and recharge groundwater aquifers.

LESS water down the storm sewer = **CLEANER** lakes and streams!

RAIN GARDEN COST SHARE PROGRAM

THE CITY OF OWATONNA STORM WATER DEPARTMENT is awarding cost share grants for a limited number of residential rain gardens. Grants will be awarded to the highest ranking projects until cost share funding for that fiscal year is expended. The City will reimburse homeowners 50% up to \$500.00 for the cost of materials in rain garden construction and rental of any construction equipment. This program is available to all residential homeowners in Owatonna city limits.

HOW TO APPLY

- 1. Apply:** Application forms will be provided during the site evaluation and on the Storm Water Department website:

www.ci.owatonna.mn.us/stormwater/

Applications will be accepted from Jan. 1 until the May 31st deadline.
- 2. Schedule a site visit:** Contact Owatonna's Storm Water Manager for a site evaluation and layout meeting (see contact information below).
- 3. Get help!** Storm Water staff are happy to provide landscape design and technical assistance throughout the application and construction process.
- 4. Wait:** City staff will award grants based on certain project criteria such as water quality improvements, volume reduction, public benefit, and cost. **Grantees will be notified by May 31st.**
- 5. Construct:** After receiving a Grant Award Letter you can begin the construction of your rain garden. The City will provide a step-by-step construction plan and supervision of installation.
- 6. Cost Share:** After all program requirements have been met and approved, a request for reimbursement can be made.



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