

Rain Garden

The Purpose of a Rain Garden

As urban development progresses, managing stormwater runoff becomes increasingly crucial. One effective method for addressing this issue is the installation of rain gardens. This bulletin provides an overview of what a rain garden is, its benefits, and the reasons your township may have required your builder to include in your property's design.

1. What is a Rain Garden?

- **Specialized landscape feature:** Designed to capture and manage stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces such as driveways, rooftops, and streets. It typically consists of a shallow depression or bowl-shaped garden planted with native vegetation that can tolerate both wet and dry conditions.
- **Collect and Infiltrate Stormwater:** Rain gardens are strategically placed to intercept runoff from rainfall or melting snow, allowing it to soak into the ground rather than flowing into storm drains.
- **Filter Pollutants:** The soil and plant roots in the rain garden filter out pollutants, such as sediment, nutrients, and heavy metals, improving the quality of the water that eventually enters groundwater systems or local waterways.

2. Key Components of a Rain Garden:

- **Inlet Area:** The area where stormwater is directed into the garden.
- **Planting Area:** The central zone, typically planted with native grasses, flowers, and shrubs.
- **Overflow Outlet:** A designed area to handle excess water during heavy rains.

3. Why Did the Builder Install a Rain Garden on My Property

- **Stormwater Management Compliance:** Many municipalities have regulations requiring new developments to manage stormwater runoff effectively. A rain garden helps meet these regulatory requirements by reducing the volume and speed of runoff, which can otherwise contribute to flooding and erosion.
- **Environmental Protection:** Rain gardens play a significant role in protecting local water bodies. By filtering pollutants before they reach storm drains, they help maintain the health of rivers, lakes, and streams, reducing the impact of urban runoff on aquatic ecosystems.



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- **Sustainability and Conservation:** Incorporating a rain garden into your landscape supports sustainable practices by conserving water and supporting local wildlife. Native plants used in rain gardens can attract pollinators, provide habitat for various species, and contribute to local biodiversity.

4. Effective Maintenance Tips

- **Regular Inspection:** Check for signs of erosion or clogging and ensure that the garden is performing as intended.
- **Weed Control:** Remove invasive species and weeds that might compete with native plants.
- **Mulching:** Apply mulch to prevent soil erosion and support plant health.
- **Seasonal Care:** Trim plants as needed and manage plant growth to maintain optimal water infiltration.

Rain gardens are an effective means of stormwater management with consideration to environmental protection. This Technical Bulletin's information may be useful in understanding why the builder was required to install a rain garden on your property. If you have any further questions or need specific guidance on maintaining your rain garden, consult with your builder or a landscaping professional.

Technical Services Team

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