Designing a Rain Garden

at least 10 feet from the foundation
depression 6-12 inches deep
6 inch berm
digging area
roots of native plants
mulch

dig a shallow flat-bottomed hole with gradually sloping sides. The average depth of a rain garden is 6-9". Leave a spot to accommodate water from the neighboring areas.

2. Choose a spot at least 10 feet away from your foundation, and down slope from your downspout, seepage, or other runoff source.

3. Dig a shallow flat-bottomed hole with gradually sloping sides. The average depth of a rain garden is 6-9". Leave a spot to accommodate water from the neighboring areas.

4. Test the overflow pattern. Fill the excavated area with water to ensure the overflow is not flowing away from buildings.

5. Direct your runoff into your rain garden if necessary by digging a shallow channel or using a pipe.

6. Plant your amendments in the bottom of the garden (if you are using them). Place the plants at the appropriate spacing, then check your arrangement before digging holes and planting. Elicit the texture and color of adjacent plants and make any design adjustments. MULCH: add a 3-inch layer of mulch. If you add mulch before planting, simply move it aside when digging holes, or after planting, place mulch loosely around plants. Uncovered shrubs/hardwood is best as it will float out of your garden, but any mulch is acceptable.

Calculate Your Rain Garden Size

Width 200-480 ft. of roof or driveway
Length 400-960 ft.

Size of garden: divide the area by 3 to obtain the rain garden size.

For more information about rain gardens, visit: www.jamesriverbasin.com • www.springfieldmo.gov/stormwater • www.watershedcommittee.org

What About Mosquitoes?

Stormwater runoff entering your rain garden should disappear within 24-48 hours of a rain event. Mosquitoes need at least a week of standing water to complete their life cycle. A poorly maintained first flush or rain garden is a major breeding ground. In time, your rain garden will become its own ecosystem, attracting hungry bats, dragonflies, and other predators of the mosquitoes, thus naturally eradicating them from your area.

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Local Rain Garden Demonstration Projects:

1. Springfield-Greene County Library Center, 1423 S. Campbell Ave
2. Roseate Neighborhood, 2406 S. Webster Ave
3. First Unitarian Universalist Church, 2434 E. Battlefield Rd
4. Westen Center, 2430 E. Valley Water Mill Rd
5. Community Foundation of the Ozarks, 435 E. Trafficway St
6. Horse Farm Elementary, 3745 S. Broadway Ave
7. Ridgedale Wilson Community Farm Park, 3825 W. Farm Rd. 146
8. Crane Dog Park, Grand and Kansas Expy
9. Ozark 4-H Building, Triune River Park
10. Park Hill Subdivision, Nixa
11. Battlefield City Hall, 581 S. Tower Drive
Rain Garden Ideas

This design features mainly grasses mixed with flowering plants in white and purple. Grasses work well to slow the flow of water where it enters the garden. Colors correspond to bloom.

- PS = Palm Sedge
- LB = Little Bluestem
- TS = Tussock Sedge
- WH = Wild Hydrangea
- PBS = Prairie Blue Star

BFL = Bunchflower Lily
BRS = Bristle Grass
COT = Cornflower
CCF = Coreopsis
SFB = Southern Blue Flag
SB = Shining Blue Star
JPW = Joe Pye Weed
SW = Sneezeweed

This design features a colorful mix of plants that bloom from May through October. Colors correspond to bloom.

- PBS = Prairie Blue Star
- COT = Cornflower
- SFB = Southern Blue Flag
- SW = Sneezeweed

Plant height & blooming. Place taller plants in the middle for a rain garden that is viewed from all sides, or place in the back if your garden is along a fence. Think about when blooms appear. Choose a variety of plants that bloom throughout the growing season.

Use this worksheet to sketch your ideas estimating the garden’s size and shape, plant selection, placement and quantity, rock, or any other design features. Scale: 1/2” = 1’