



Ozaukee County Land and Water Rain Garden Initiative

An Effort to Improve Water Quality

Rain gardens are effective in removing up to 90% of nutrients and chemicals and up to 80% of sediments from the rainwater runoff. Compared to a conventional lawn, rain gardens allow for 30% more water to soak into the ground. This project will promote rain gardens in the Milwaukee River watershed in Ozaukee County by providing 70% cost-sharing up to a maximum of \$750 per rain garden.

This promotional program will broadcast the benefits of rain gardens and serve to establish 25 plus rain gardens throughout Ozaukee County. Information about rain gardens and the availability of cost-sharing will be made available at the Land & Water Management Department. Information on rain gardens prepared by the WDNR and UWEX is also available on their websites.

Every time it rains, water runs off impermeable surfaces, such as roofs or driveways, collecting pollutants such as particles of dirt, fertilizer, chemicals, oil, garbage, and bacteria along the way. The pollutant-laden water enters storm drains untreated and flows directly to nearby streams and ponds. The US EPA estimates that pollutants carried by rainwater runoff account for 70% of all water pollution. Rain gardens collect rainwater runoff, allowing the water to be filtered by vegetation and percolate into the soil recharging groundwater aquifers. These additional rain gardens will serve to reduce pollutants in the Lake Michigan watershed and serve to inspire others to install rain gardens as well, multiplying the impact of this innovative project.

If you would like more information about rain gardens or this project please contact Geoff Schramm at 262 284 8315 or gschramm@co.ozaukee.wi.us.