

WHAT IS A RAIN GARDEN?

A rain garden catches and holds water that runs off from your roof or other impervious coverage (like a driveway) on your property. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) considers stormwater runoff as ***the number one threat to water quality*** in our lakes and streams. Sediment, including sand and dirt from your yard, enters the lake during a rainstorm. A rain garden fills with water during a storm, and the water slowly filters into the ground rather than running into storm sewers or directly entering the lake from your yard.

Compared to a patch of lawn, a rain garden catches water and allows about 30% more to soak into the ground by creating a root “sponge” zone. Pollutants and nutrients are filtered in a rain garden.

A rain garden will resemble a typical garden, although it is planted slightly below grade. A variety of grasses, wildflowers, and woody plants-specifically native plants- are used as they have adapted to our New Jersey climate. Native plants require minimal maintenance once they are established.

The first step in construction of a rain garden is to identify an appropriate location on your property. You must understand how water will enter and fill the garden, as well as where it will flow out. A rain garden should be located at least 10 feet from a home with a basement, but as close as 2 feet if you have no basement.

A rain garden can capture water before it collects in soggy areas. They are ideally positioned so that stormwater runoff flows from an impervious surface towards and into the garden. This will minimize flooding and erosion on small Lake Mohawk properties.

Visit our demonstration rain garden near the dam on the boardwalk. You will see that they can be beautiful as well as function. The Lake Mohawk Preservation Foundation holds workshops on rain garden construction. We can also assist you with consultants for developing your rain garden. Contact us at foundation@lakemohawkcountryclub.com.

Reference: Rain Garden Manual of New Jersey. 2015. Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. http://www.water.rutgers.edu/Rain_Gardens/RGWebsite/RainGardenManualofNJ.html