

Managing Stormwater in Allenstown

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Stormwater, or runoff, is the water that flows as a result of rain or snowmelt. Stormwater travels across pavement and other surfaces collecting sediment, chemicals, and pollutants, including but not limited to motor oil, gasoline, lawn chemicals, pet waste, and deicing chemicals. It can carry these harmful pollutants directly into waterways, contaminating water used for drinking, recreation, and for local wildlife.

Residents of Allenstown enjoy the benefits of the town's location along the Merrimack and Suncook Rivers and it is of the utmost importance to maintain the quality of these waters to the highest standards. There are many steps that the town and residents can take to protect waterways and drinking water. This flyer is just one in a series about how residents and business owners can do their part. Read on to learn more.

The Benefits of Rain Gardens

Summer has come and with it blooming flowers and also runoff. Luckily there's a way to create a mutually beneficial relationship between the two. Rain gardens provide so many benefits to plant, animal, and human life.

A rain garden is a garden planted in a swale or depression, which is designed to capture and treat stormwater. Stormwater is diverted to the rain garden where moisture-tolerant plants help to filter sediments and pollutants before the water is eventually absorbed back into the ground to recharge the water table.

Rain gardens help reduce the amount of untreated water entering rivers and streams, which may travel across pavement and pick up more pollutants along the way, like oil and deicing chemicals.

Depending on what plants you choose to

incorporate into your rain garden, not only will they beautify your property, they can provide habitat and food for bees and butterflies. Continue reading for tips on to how to build your own rain garden, what plants to include, and how to maintain it.



Photo credit: MA Watershed Coalition

Rain Garden Tips

Where to locate your garden?

- Position your rain garden to catch water runoff from surfaces such as your roof, driveway, or walkway.
- Install your rain garden to be about 6-8 inches deep. However, it should not be located in a low spot or wetland, which can cause even more water issues from slow infiltration and ponding.
- Locate your rain garden at least 10 feet from your foundation to prevent any water from entering into your basement.
- Avoid locating your rain garden over your septic system or well.

Local Water Tolerant Plants

- Marginal Wood Fern
- Butterfly Milkweed
- Marsh Marigold
- Indian Grass
- Common Winterberry
- New England Aster
- Switch Grass or Panic Grass
- Northern Lady Fern
- High/Lowbush Blueberry
- Little Bluestem
- Red Chokeberry
- Cinnamon Fern



Lowbush Blueberry. Photo by Gardening Know How



Butterfly Milkweed. Photo by Long Island Natives

Maintaining Your Rain Garden

- Inspect for erosion or built up sediment and repair as necessary.
- Remove weeds and invasive species.
- Choose organic fertilizers and lawn treatments.

Additional Resources:

Think Blue Suncook—<http://thinkbluesuncook.org/>

UConn NEMO Rain Garden App—<https://nemo.uconn.edu/raingardens/index.htm>

EPA Soak Up The Rain—<https://www.epa.gov/soakuptherain/soak-rain-rain-gardens>

NH-MS4 Regional Stormwater Coalitions—<https://www4.des.state.nh.us/nh-ms4/>

Town of Allenstown, New Hampshire—<https://www.allenstownnh.gov/>

