



An overloaded storm sewer

Our land is being covered with non-porous surfaces: streets, driveways, parking lots, sidewalks and rooftops. During storm events, rainwater landing on these impervious surfaces can't be absorbed into the ground. Instead it runs off into our storm sewers, roads and creeks. Too much stormwater running off without a place to infiltrate can cause flooding, severe streambank erosion, and degradation of water quality.

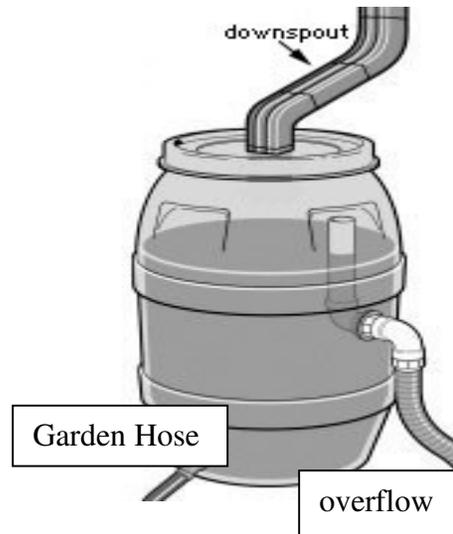
Two easy ways residents and businesses can help reduce stormwater runoff is to install rain gardens, or install rain barrels to capture and recycle rain water.

Rain barrels capture stormwater running off rooftops and hold the water for later use.

Rain gardens provide a pervious surface that allows water to infiltrate into the ground to recharge the groundwater supply and reduce surface runoff.

## *Rain Barrels*

Rain barrels can be used by homeowners or businesses to capture roof runoff and allow it to be released slowly through pervious surfaces, thus recharging the local groundwater system.



Rain barrels can be installed to filter directly into rain gardens, preventing storm water runoff from flowing across impervious surfaces and picking up non-point pollutants that could enter our neighborhood water bodies.

Rain barrels can easily be fitted to existing downspouts.

## *Rain Gardens*

Rain gardens are excavated shallow surface depressions planted with selected native vegetation to treat and capture runoff to slowly recharge groundwater levels.

Rain gardens should be planted with native plants that can tolerate wet conditions. Many local nurseries can help you select the appropriate plants for your garden site.

Rain gardens also help to reduce non-point source pollution. Plant roots can uptake pollutants such as fertilizer or pesticide from surface runoff and prevent them from entering our water supply.



A street lined with rain gardens

## *Managing Stormwater*

The US EPA estimates that up to 50% of this nation's urban water pollution is carried by runoff from developed areas. Rainwater draining from the roofs of homes and businesses crosses lawns and impervious surfaces, picking up fertilizers, pesticides, trash, oil and animal wastes. These non-point sources of pollution enter our local waterways through direct surface runoff or through storm drains.

You can help in reducing water pollution by:

- Clean up after your dog
- Limit your use of pesticides and fertilizers
- Install rain barrels and rain gardens
- Don't litter!
- Clean up any oil or gas spills

Many communities are marking their storm drains to discourage citizens from dumping pollutants directly into storm drains.

## *For Further Information:*

The Pennsylvania Resources Council hosts rain barrel/rain garden programs and workshops. Call for 610-353-1555 for information.

There are many excellent websites dedicated to helping you design and install rain gardens, including:

- [www.dep.state.pa.us](http://www.dep.state.pa.us)
- [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)
- [www.appliedeco.com](http://www.appliedeco.com)

There are also many websites offering quality rain barrels for sale or providing you with information on making your own rain barrel from a recycled barrel.

A web search will lead you to information on purchasing a rain barrel or making your own.

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## Rain Barrels and Rain Gardens



## Stormwater Management Information for Residents of Delaware County

Provided as a public service by  
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