



NEWS ARTICLE

Rain Gardens and Trees

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Rain gardens are a great way to add beauty to a yard or public area as well as improve water conservation. A rain garden collects water from rain and deposits it into the ground, replenishing the groundwater supply. Although it is generally discouraged to have a large tree near a rain garden, smaller trees and shrubs are excellent ways to help water infiltration. Go to the University of Rhode Island website for a list of trees and shrubs that are good to plant in a rain garden (<http://www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes/raingarden.htm>).

The University gives several tips when considering where to place a rain garden:

- The rain garden should be at least 10 feet from the house so infiltrating water doesn't seep into the foundation.
- Do not place the rain garden directly over a septic system or near wells and underground utilities.
- It is better to build the rain garden in full or partial sun, not directly under a big tree.
- It may be tempting to put the rain garden in a part of the yard where water already ponds. Don't! The goal of a rain garden is to encourage infiltration, and your yard's wet patches show where infiltration is slow.
- Water should only pool in your rain garden for several hours after rainfall before it is absorbed. This is important for both the plants as well as mosquito concerns.

Rain gardens will require maintenance for the first year after planting. The weeds should be removed and additional water given during dry seasons as the rain garden needs time to become established. After the rain garden is established, maintenance becomes minimal.

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