



FIGURE 9: Rain Gardens—a Beautiful and Effective Way to Manage Stormwater

A rain garden is a highly effective stormwater management tool recommended for use throughout the Lake George watershed. A rain garden is built in a low area near impervious surfaces on a property and consists of an absorption area designed to infiltrate stormwater.



Build a Rain Garden

A rain garden is a highly effective way to manage stormwater onsite and close to its source.

Rain gardens are perennial gardens that may include trees, shrubs, flowers and ground cover. They capture, infiltrate and treat stormwater. Rain gardens are a beautiful and effective way to protect Lake George because they infiltrate and treat stormwater pollution that would otherwise flow directly overland and into the lake. Rain gardens are an inexpensive stormwater management addition to your property.

Impervious surfaces, such as a roof, sidewalk, driveway, patio and even a compacted lawn, create stormwater runoff that runs into streams or the lake. As stormwater moves across the surface it gathers soil, twigs, leaves, grass, fertilizer, herbicides, gas and oils, among other things, which when combined deliver high volumes of nutrients and harmful pollutants to Lake George. See pages 8–9 for more information on stormwater runoff.

A rain garden is a natural shallow or constructed depression that is designed to capture and treat stormwater runoff on a property. Rain gardens are not effective in areas of high groundwater or in poorly drained soils. Rain gardens are especially useful for stormwater retrofits for existing developments.

Rain gardens are easy to install. Such a garden should be located in an area where it will be the most effective in capturing stormwater. It should be at least 10 feet from a house and not located within 50 feet of a septic system. A rain garden can be planted in full sun, partial shade and shaded areas, but should not be placed in an area of a yard that is already wet, which indicates saturated soil. A rain garden should contain native plants that tolerate dry conditions between rainfall events and don't require fertilizers or additional watering once established. There are many flowering native perennials that can be used to enhance a rain garden's beauty. See page 46 for more information about native plants species and pages 54–55 for a list of native plants.

Polluted stormwater runoff is one of the leading causes of the steady decline of Lake George water quality. Every landowner should have a goal to infiltrate the precipitation that falls on their property, allowing virtually no stormwater to flow off their property. A rain garden is a good contribution toward that goal. 💧

KEY MESSAGES:

1. A rain garden is an attractive and inexpensive way to treat stormwater on your property.
2. Rain gardens are easy to build.
3. A rain garden should be located in an area of good soil where it will capture stormwater. It should be at least 10 feet from a house and 50 feet from a septic system.

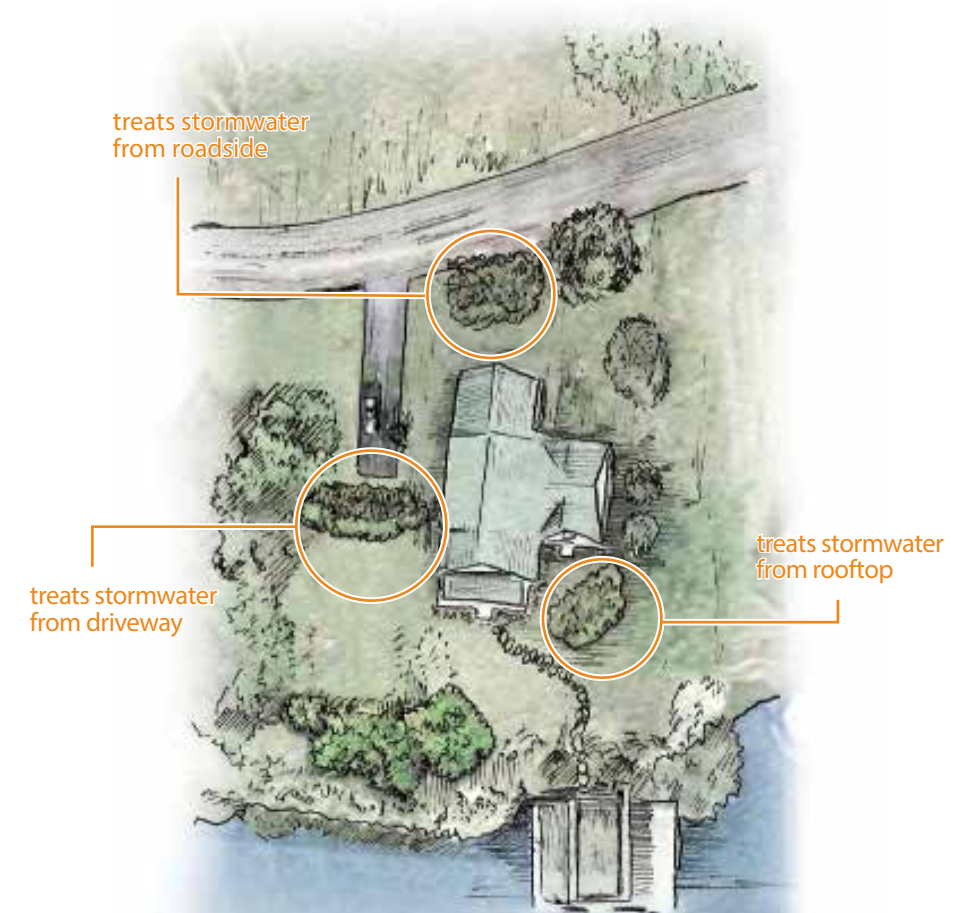


FIGURE 10:
Rain Garden placement

Rain gardens should be built near impervious surfaces.