RainReady Oak Park
Creating + Caring for Smart Landscaping
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Margaret O'Dell Master Gardeners of Illinois
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Overview

Keeping Water Where You Want It

RainReady Oak Park Grant Program

Caring for Rain Gardens

Q & A
1: More Rain

Observed Change in Very Heavy Precipitation
1958 - 2012

Source: 2014 National Climate Assessment (Fig. 2.18)
2: Less Green Space

Source: Stream Corridor Restoration: Principles, Processes, and Practices (FISRG)
3. Sewers + Suburbs + Rain

Local Municipal Sewer

Intercepting Sewer
Flows to water reclamation plants

Source: Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
Hierarchy for Stormwater Management

AVOID IT
Avoid stormwater runoff by protecting open space

SINK IT
Catch and sink runoff by adding porous paving, trees, and rain gardens to urban areas

HOLD IT
Hold runoff temporarily through detention basins in parks, golf courses, reservoirs, etc.

SEND IT
Send runoff to treatment facilities using pipes, tunnels, and ditches
## Benefits of Smart Landscaping

| Practice               | Reduces Stormwater Runoff | Improves Water Quality | Reduces Graywater Infrastructure Needs | Reduces Flooding | Increases Available Water Supply | Increases Groundwater Recharge | Reduces Salt Use | Improves Air Quality | Reduces Energy Use | Reduces Atmospheric CO₂ | Reduces Urban Heat Island | Improves Aesthetics | Improves Recreational Opportunity | Improves Noise Pollution | Improves Community Cohesion | Urban Agriculture | Improves Habitat | Cultivates Public Education Opportunities |
|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Green Roofs            | ![Yes](chart)             | ![Yes](chart)          | ![Yes](chart)                          | ![Yes](chart)   | ![Yes](chart)                    | ![Yes](chart)                | ![Yes](chart)   | ![Yes](chart)       | ![Yes](chart)       | ![Yes](chart)                | ![Yes](chart)            | ![Yes](chart)     | ![Yes](chart)                              | ![Yes](chart)              | ![Yes](chart)     | ![Yes](chart)         | ![Yes](chart)              |
| Tree Planting          | ![Yes](chart)             | ![Yes](chart)          | ![Yes](chart)                          | ![Yes](chart)   | ![Yes](chart)                    | ![Yes](chart)                | ![Yes](chart)   | ![Yes](chart)       | ![Yes](chart)       | ![Yes](chart)                | ![Yes](chart)            | ![Yes](chart)     | ![Yes](chart)                              | ![Yes](chart)              | ![Yes](chart)     | ![Yes](chart)         | ![Yes](chart)              |
| Bioretention & Infiltration | ![Yes](chart)        | ![Yes](chart)          | ![Yes](chart)                          | ![Yes](chart)   | ![Yes](chart)                    | ![Yes](chart)                | ![Yes](chart)   | ![Yes](chart)       | ![Yes](chart)       | ![Yes](chart)                | ![Yes](chart)            | ![Yes](chart)     | ![Yes](chart)                              | ![Yes](chart)              | ![Yes](chart)     | ![Yes](chart)         | ![Yes](chart)              |
| Permeable Pavement     | ![Yes](chart)             | ![Yes](chart)          | ![Yes](chart)                          | ![Yes](chart)   | ![Yes](chart)                    | ![Yes](chart)                | ![Yes](chart)   | ![Yes](chart)       | ![Yes](chart)       | ![Yes](chart)                | ![Yes](chart)            | ![Yes](chart)     | ![Yes](chart)                              | ![Yes](chart)              | ![Yes](chart)     | ![Yes](chart)         | ![Yes](chart)              |
| Water Harvesting       | ![Yes](chart)             | ![Yes](chart)          | ![Yes](chart)                          | ![Yes](chart)   | ![Yes](chart)                    | ![Yes](chart)                | ![Yes](chart)   | ![Yes](chart)       | ![Yes](chart)       | ![Yes](chart)                | ![Yes](chart)            | ![Yes](chart)     | ![Yes](chart)                              | ![Yes](chart)              | ![Yes](chart)     | ![Yes](chart)         | ![Yes](chart)              |

*Source: The Value of Green Infrastructure: A Guide (CNT)*
How Water Enters Your Home

Source: Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction
Yard Ponding + Overland Flow

Telltale Signs
• Standing water outdoors
• Always soggy soils
• Water damage at basement windows + doors

Image: CNT
Foundation Seepage

Telltale Signs
- Water at interior walls
- Water stains
- Mold
- Peeling paint
- Powdery brick

Image: CNT
Sewage Backup

Telltale Signs
• Standing water inside
• Stains on walls and floors
• Sediment near floor drains or bathroom plumbing
Resources

Grants +
Technical Assistance

RainReady Oak Park Landscaping Grant
http://rainready.org/projects/rainready-oak-park

Village of Oak Park Sewer Backup Protection Grant
https://www.oak-park.us/village-services/housing-programs/sewer-backup-protection-grant

RainReady Socials
http://rainready.org/our-services/rainready-home

Guidance

My.RainReady.org
RainReady Oak Park

Program Goals
• Reduce runoff to sewer system
• Reduce home drainage problems
• Provide public health and environmental benefits

Program Application
• Oak Park homeowner
• Disconnected downspouts & yard space
• No outstanding Village obligations or building violations

Grants
• 50% match up to $1,300
Eligible Landscaping

Rain Gardens + Bioswales

Cisterns

Dry Wells

Depaving + Permeable Pavement
How It Works

1. Apply for a grant
2. Sign the grant agreement
3. Schedule your home assessment
4. Review your flood prevention recommendations and suggested landscaping design
5. Choose your preferred landscaper
6. Complete landscaping no later than October 31st
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape and Building Exterior Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The south yard is unevenly graded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The downspouts are discharging into low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spots that can trap and hold water against</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the south foundation wall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The soil texture is a clay loam.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Some gutters and downspouts and the exterior drain appear to be partially clogged with leaf litter.

- The downspouts from the north adjacent home is discharging against the foundation wall.
- The north concrete sidewalk is pitched toward your home, which can trap water against the foundation.
- The sealant at the joint between the concrete sidewalk and the home is weathered.

**RainReady Report**
Recommended Landscaping Design

PLANT LIST:
Celandine poppy (Stylophorum diphyllum)
Cardinal flower (Lobelia cardinalis)
Columbine (Aquilegia Canadensis)
Crested iris (Iris cristata)
Golden Alexanders (Zizia aurea)
Big-leaved Aster (Aster macrophyllus)

Gray’s sedge (Carex grayii)
Small yellow foxtail (Carex panamensis)
Maidenhair fern (Adiantum pedatum)
Wild ginger (Asarum canadense)
Curly-style Wood Sedge (Carex rosettii)

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(Additional notes and instructions about the design and plant placement)
Construction

Before

After
Inspection + Evaluation
FAQ

Will smart landscaping stop my flooding?
Smart landscaping will help with yard ponding. Addressing severe yard ponding due to runoff from the alley, street, or neighbors may require an expensive installation that exceeds the maximum grant provided by RainReady Oak Park. Smart landscaping can help lessen seepage by fixing the grading around your home, but building foundation repairs or other work may be necessary too. If you have sewage backup, please apply instead for a Sewer Backup Protection Grant.

Do I have the right kind of yard for smart landscaping?
All smart landscaping should be connected to at least one downspout. The downspout(s) should take the rain from at least one-fourth of your roof. Above ground cisterns can be located right next to your home. Cisterns should be emptied between storms, and discharged on your property, at least ten feet away from any building foundation. Rain gardens, bioswales, dry wells, and permeable pavement should be located at least ten feet away from any building foundation. Permeable pavement should only be installed in an area where you currently have regular concrete or asphalt.

How big should my smart landscaping installation be?
The answer depends on the size and shape of your roof and yard, your soil, and how much rain you want to capture. All rain gardens will provide some benefits, like keeping water out of the sewer, providing habitat for butterflies, and adding beauty to your home. In the RainReady pilot program, the average rain garden installation was between 300 and 400 square feet. You can try out a rain garden calculator here: [http://raingardenalliance.org/right/calculator](http://raingardenalliance.org/right/calculator)

What if I have a connected downspout?
Downspout disconnection is required to receive a RainReady Oak Park grant. If you have connected downspouts but you are willing to disconnect all of them, please include that information in your application. If you believe one or more of your downspouts needs to remain connected, you can submit a Downspout Disconnection Waiver to the Village for review (see website). Email RainReadyHome@cnt.org if you have already applied, or for more information.
Questions?

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