

# know where it goes

take simple steps to reduce STORMWATER POLLUTION

## A Strategy for Stormwater Education Through Yard Care Workshops

Updated 2018

### What do we want residents to do?

- Practice more stormwaterfriendly lawn and garden care.

### What are the messages?

- Fertilize sparingly.
- Sweep up, don't hose.
- Water wisely.
- Divert or collect rooftop runoff.

### Help Lawn and Garden Enthusiasts Be Stormwater-Friendly!

Achieving a lush green lawn, beautiful spring flowers, and hearty summer crops are understandable gardening goals.

Unfortunately, the gardening practices used to achieve those goals often contribute to stormwater pollution. Most notably, the use of excessive lawn chemicals and excessive watering.

It is important to convey to our neighbors that they can still have beautiful

lawns and gardens, while promoting the health of local water resources at the same time.

*Lawn chemicals often wind up washing directly into local waters. Sparing use of fertilizers and pesticides helps reduce stormwater pollution.*



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### What Help Is Out There?

If you want lawns and gardens to be less of a stormwater concern in your town, then we have a strategy for you!

This newsletter highlights four steps to achieving that goal. To help you along, we can offer you:

- contact information for URI's Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Program,
- a sample flyer and PowerPoint for the Master Gardener presentation,
- fact sheets on stormwater-friendly gardening practices and diverting rooftop runoff,
- sample factsheets on rain barrels and rain gardens, and
- a sample press release for a rain barrel sale.

These resources can be found on the **Rhode Island Stormwater Solutions** website.

Organizing a rain barrel sale: <https://web.uri.edu/riss/take-action/in-your-community/organize-a-rain-barrel-sale/resources/>

Building a community rain garden: <https://web.uri.edu/riss/take-action/in-your-community/build-a-community-rain-garden/resources/>

## Step 1. Schedule a Master Gardener Presentation



The following **materials** will be available to help with this step:

- a sample flyer for advertising the event
- a PowerPoint presentation, illustrating the main messages
- factsheets for distribution about lawn care practices and diverting rooftop runoff

### Steps to take:

- Contact the Master Gardener Program by email *gardener@uri.edu* or by phone March – October, Monday – Thursday, 9 am – 2 pm at 874-4836.
- Advertise the presentation. Consider making it part of an already-scheduled committee meeting.

**Volunteers** could be recruited to:

- Help publicize and staff the event or provide refreshments.

## Step 2. Hold a Rain Barrel Sale



The following **materials** will be available to help with this step:

- a press release on the rain barrel sale
- a rain barrel fact sheet
- rain barrel purchasing information

- factsheet about diverting rooftop runoff

### Steps to take:

- Distribute press releases.

**Volunteers** could be recruited to:

- Help staff the event or provide refreshments.

## Step 3. Create a Demonstration Rain Garden



The following **materials** will be available to help with this step:

- a brochure about an existing demonstration rain garden project, including costs and design features
- a rain garden fact sheet

### Steps to take:

- Check with RI DEM for Earth Day grants.
- Pick a visible location with some degree of public access.
- Collaborate with a local landscape architect or Master Gardener, *who is familiar with rain garden design.*

**Volunteers** could be recruited to:

- Seek contributions from local businesses for funds to create the garden or specifically from local plant nurseries to donate advice, labor, and/or plants to the creation of the garden.

## Step 4. Publicize Yearly Reminders

The following **materials** will be available to help with this step:

- short articles for local papers reminding people about stormwater-friendly gardening tips.

### Steps to take:

- Distribute the short article to local papers.

## Keep Track of Your Success

Documenting your success at increasing residents' awareness of stormwater-friendly lawn and garden care will be instrumental to having continued support for the program. Here are a few methods you could use:

1. Keep records of the number of press releases and articles that have been printed, informing the public about related events or stormwater-friendly practices.
2. Keep records of the number of people who attend workshops.
3. Keep records of the number of rain barrels sold through an organized Rain Barrel Sale.

