

Rain Gardens

A rain garden is a depressed, landscaped area that is designed to accept, clean and infiltrate stormwater runoff from your property. Infiltration will take several hours depending on soil type.

- Place your garden at least 3m from your home's foundation and 2m from all property lines.
- Choose a variety of plants that can tolerate very wet and very dry conditions in layers of mulch, loamy soil and gravel to allow for proper infiltration.
- Choose a location in partial or full sun.
- Rain gardens should not interfere with the existing swales on your property.
- Ensure that the location and construction of your rain garden does not adversely affect your property or your neighbours.

See riversides.org/rainguide for more information.

Container Gardening

This approach is great for residents that live in apartments, condos or townhouses, but can also be used by homeowners who want to make the most of their deck or patio.

- Plant a potted herb garden, tomato plant, or pepper plant. You'd be surprised what you can grow in such a small space.
- Consider a self-watering container – this reduces your personal efforts and ensures vegetables and herbs receive the water they need to flourish.



Examples of container gardening

Rain Barrels

- Excellent non-chlorinated water source for garden beds, pots and hanging baskets (if your barrel is slightly elevated and has a spigot, a hose can use gravity to feed water to your lawn).
- Save money on your water bill.
- Ensure your barrel is vector/mosquito proof and has an overflow system. Most manufactured rain barrels come with these features.
- Drain your rain barrel before each rain event to allow for full capacity storage.
- Drain your rain barrel before the winter – water will freeze and can crack the barrel.
- Available at your local home improvement store.



****Note:** before disconnecting your downspout make sure that overflow will not discharge onto a hard surface (driveway, walkway etc.) or surface that will adversely affect your property or your neighbours'. For more information see www.riversides.org/rainguide

Downspout Disconnection

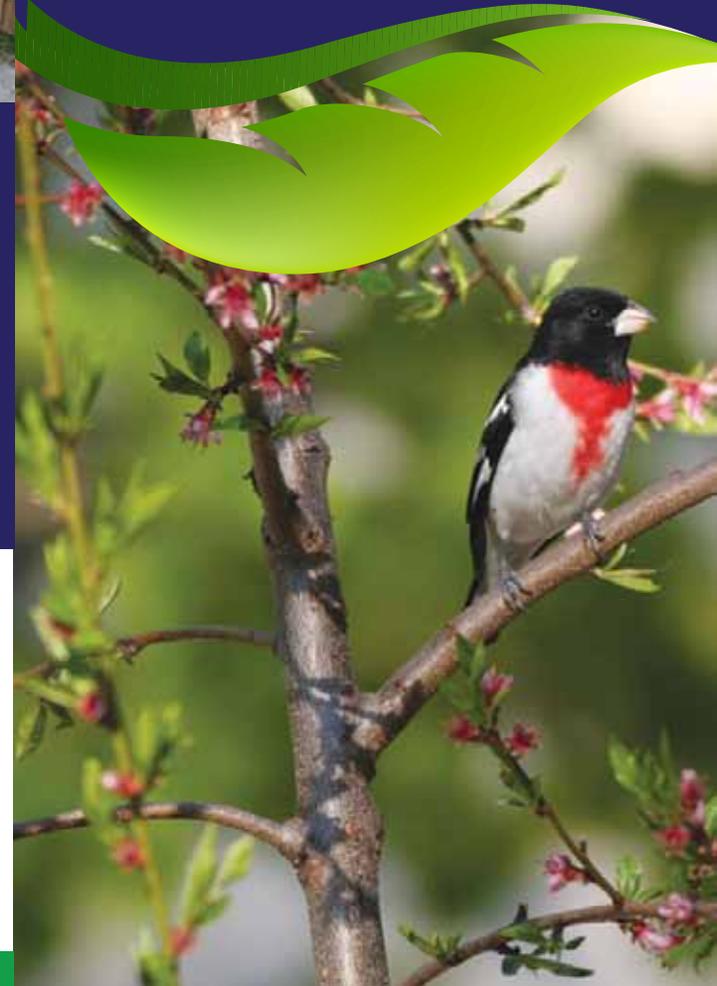
One of the easiest ways to improve and protect water quality is to disconnect the downspouts from the roof. Downspouts can be directed into a storage tank (a rain barrel or a rain harvesting tank) to be used later, or onto a permeable surface such as lawns to infiltrate naturally. In older parts of the Town, some downspouts are connected to the sanitary sewer increasing the possibility of a sewage back-up in a major rain event.

Progressive

Accountable

Community-Focused

Eco-Conscious



Lawn Care

Lawns are one of the most common forms of landscaping in Canada – and they are expensive to maintain. Residents spend hundreds of dollars a year on water, fuel and fertilizers. Not only does this put a strain on your pocketbook, it puts a strain on the environment.

Here are some simple things you can do to save you money and help you grow an attractive, sustainable lawn:

Nourish the soil

- Apply compost.
- Leave grass clippings where they fall.
- Reduce fertilizer use. Use organic fertilizers in spring and fall according to directions.

Aerate

- Allows water and air to get under the top layer of grass – top dress with soil and seed mixture.
- Helps choke out dandelions and other weeds.
- Use hardy and drought tolerant seed mixtures – for best results, seed in the fall.

Mow high with a sharp blade

- Don't cut grass too short – maintain a height of at least 7 cm.
- Shades out sun-loving weeds.
- Keeps soil cool and moist (less watering).
- Use a push mower (instead of one that uses gas or electricity).

Water wisely

- Early morning watering reduces evaporation.
- Determine the amount of water your lawn gets by using a rain gauge - grass needs only 2.6 cm/week.
- Durham provides FREE rain gauges – pick yours up at Vandermeer Nursery.
- Use soaker hoses in garden beds - helps prevent leaf rot and ensures root penetration.

Native Plants

Native plants have evolved with the Town and are well suited for local conditions: temperature, precipitation and soil quality. Planting native species brings several benefits:

- Easier to care for and requires less water and fertilizer.
- Provides food and homes for native insects and animals.
- Forms part of a natural, balanced ecosystem.
- Adds colourful, textural beauty to your landscape.

Thinking of planting native plants?

Try some of these:

Black Eyed Susan
Bottlebrush Grass
Christmas Fern
Heart-leaf Foamflower
Little Bluestem
New England Aster
Pearly Everlasting
White Wood Aster
Wild Bergamot
Wild Geranium
Wild Ginger
Wild Strawberry
Woodlot Strawberry



Black Eyed Susan



White Wood Aster

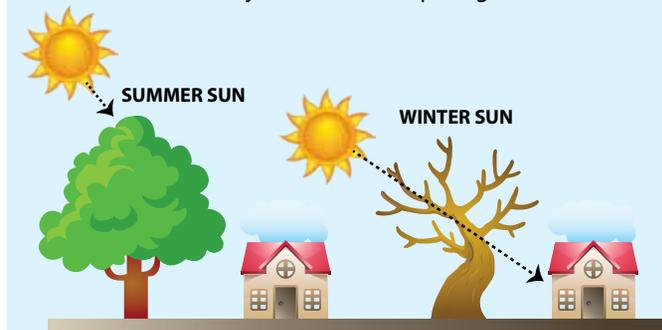


Wild Geranium

Landscaping for Energy Efficiency

Summer Shading

- Plant deciduous trees (trees that lose their leaves in the fall) on the south and west sides of your home.
- Large trees that shade the roof of your house can drop the indoor temperature by up to 5 degrees Celsius.
- Shade your air conditioner – it doesn't have to work as hard to cool your home if it is pulling in cooler air.



Winter Windbreaks

- Plant a row of tall evergreens on the northwest side of your home – this row will block or reduce the speed of cold winter wind.
- Plant a row of smaller evergreens about four feet away from the north side of your home – this row acts as a layer of insulation.

Insulating Vines

- Helps keep your home warm in the winter and cool in the summer.
- Should only be trained to grow up undamaged walls and away from wooden windows, sills and doors.
- Can also be trained to grow up trellises against walls.

To learn more about gardening and lawn care, visit the *Toronto Region and Conservation Authority* at trca.on.ca/yards