

# THE STORMWATER CHALLENGE

## What happens when it rains?

In planted landscapes rain soaks into the ground. But when rain falls onto roofs, roads, driveways and other hard surfaces, it cannot infiltrate. In most neighborhoods this rainwater runoff is directed into storm sewers. From there it makes its way to a nearby stream, wetland, pond, or lake—untreated!

## What's wrong with sending stormwater down the storm sewer?

- Stormwater pollutes local waters. Most runoff is not treated. It goes directly into local lakes and streams carrying pollutants like soil, fertilizers, pesticides, oil, soap, litter, organic matter, and pet feces.
- Stormwater runoff in our lakes causes turbid water, sediment buildup and contributes to algae blooms. It can impact health of aquatic plants and animals. Poor water quality in lakes also affects aesthetics and recreation.
- Sending rainwater out of the neighborhood contributes to flooding downstream.
- Rainwater needs to soak in near where it falls so it can help recharge groundwater aquifers.

# WHAT IS A RAIN GARDEN?

A rain garden is a depression in the landscape, that is planted like a garden, collects rainwater runoff, and allows it to infiltrate.

