

Managing Rainwater Around Your Home

Let the rain soak in

Rain that falls on hard surfaces like roofs and driveways collects quickly and runs off to the nearest storm drain or ditch. This stormwater runoff can lead to flooding, stream channel damage and water quality problems.

Runoff, whether from drizzle or a pounding rainstorm, picks up fertilizers, pesticides, soaps and other pollutants and transports them to the nearest storm drain and eventually to local creeks, wetlands and Lake Washington. This pollution contaminates our waterways and can harm or kill fish and other wildlife.

Stormwater runoff quickly flows downstream from developed land during the rainy season. As a result, this water can cause localized flooding of homes and businesses and overwhelm streams, wetlands and wildlife habitat. This flooding harms streams and wetlands and destroys habitat needed for fish and other wildlife.



Slow it, spread it, filter it, soak it in...

In the forest, rain gets slowed down by tree needles and leaves, then spread out over spongy soils and plants that filter out pollution. The rain slowly seeps down into the groundwater that keeps the water in our streams running cool all summer.

You can help Kirkland work more like the forest by taking some simple steps around your home to manage rainwater wisely.

Residential properties make up about 52% of Kirkland's private land, so what we all do at home really does make a difference!

You can capture that water before it leaves your property, slow it down and allow it to absorb into your soil. Plants, organic materials and tiny organisms filter and clean the water and allow it to recharge our groundwater system.

If we can prevent rainwater from becoming stormwater by keeping it on site, our collective efforts can reduce the volume of runoff and pollutants entering our natural systems - benefitting our communities, businesses, creeks, lakes, wildlife and the overall health of Puget Sound.



Plant trees

Preserve existing trees and plant new ones in your yard. Trees and plants, especially evergreens, do a good job of absorbing and evaporating rainfall, slowing runoff.



Build healthy soils

Add compost to new plantings. Mulch existing plantings with compost, leaves or woody mulches. Both feed the soil and help more rain soak in.



Build a rain garden

Rain gardens are landscaped depressions that capture and filter rainwater runoff. Their deep, compost-amended soils help slow down and soak up polluted water from downspouts and driveways.

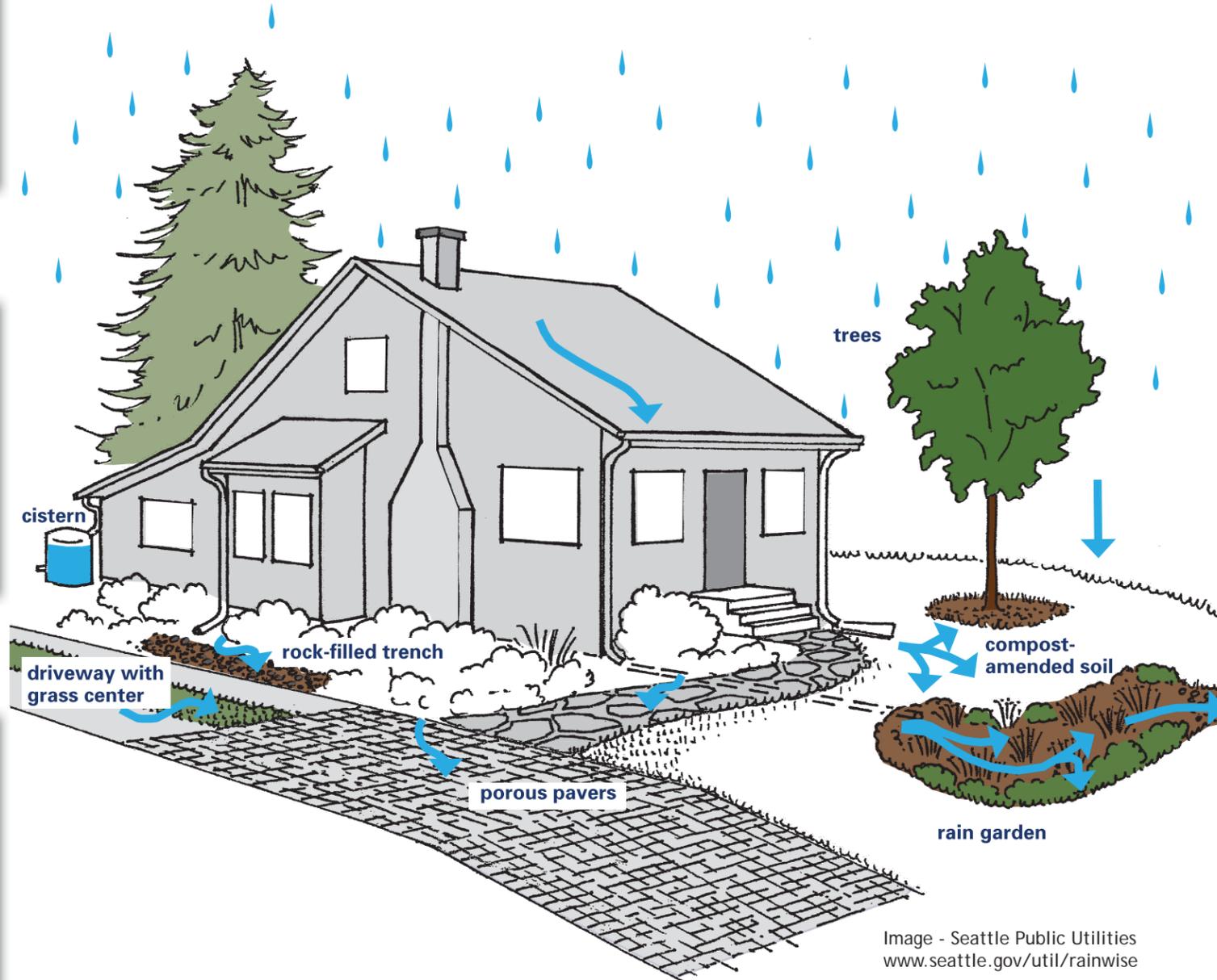


Disconnect downspouts

Disconnecting downspouts from footing drains or storm drains and directing that water to your landscape decreases the amount of polluted runoff that enters our creeks, lakes and wetlands.



Slow the flow of rainwater and soak it in



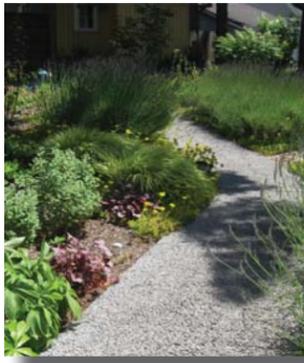
As you consider ways to soak in rain around your yard, be sure to address your wants, needs and constraints before starting project design. Rank your priorities and consider options that work with your existing landscape and features.

Many factors should be considered in planning any landscape project. Some of these are:

- site conditions such as soil type and shade;
- functional or use requirements such as play areas and structures;
- surroundings such as wetlands and/or neighborhood culture and environment;
- personal tastes and interests;
- local codes, association covenants and other requirements.

Install permeable pavement

Permeable pavement allows the rain to soak through patios, walkways or driveways and filter into the ground, instead of rushing to the nearest waterway.



Replace lawn with native plants

Native plants are adapted to our local soils and climate. Their extensive root systems help absorb water into the ground and reduce the amount of runoff leaving a yard.



Install a green roof

Green roofs capture and slow roof runoff. These can be installed on existing flat and sloped roofs with proper structural review.



Install a cistern

Cisterns can hold hundreds of gallons of rainwater from your roof and help reduce peak storm runoff. They can also hold water to irrigate your lawn and garden in summer.



Resources

12,000 Rain Gardens in Puget Sound Campaign

www.12000raingardens.org

Rain garden planning, design and construction resources for Seattle / Puget Sound homeowners, schools and government

Rain Garden Handbook for Western Washington Homeowners

www.ecy.wa.gov, search "Rain Garden Handbook"

A guide for helping people plan, design and build rain gardens to assist in controlling stormwater

Puget Sound Rain Gardens

raingarden.wsu.edu

WSU Extension website listing classes, resources and assistance available for rain garden construction

Natural Yard Care Neighborhoods

www.naturalyardcare.info

Information on caring for your yard naturally, including soils, plants, fertilizers and pest management

Northwest Yard and Garden (King County)

www.kingcounty.gov/environment/stewardship/nw-yard-and-garden.aspx

Information and programs related to environmentally-friendly gardening and yard care

Garden Hotline

www.gardenhotline.org, 206-633-0224

Free individualized solutions to garden problems that are practical, safe, effective and natural

City of Kirkland

www.kirklandwa.gov

Information on City codes, permitting, contact information, tools and additional resources



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Public Works Department
Surface Water Division

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