CASE STUDY

Building a Rain Garden

Flooding is a common issue for outdoor spaces. But did you know that it can also lead to water pollution in urban areas? When rainwater enters the sewer system, it can lead to what is known as a combined sewer overflow and pollute nearby bodies of water.

Pathway before—
prone to flooding.

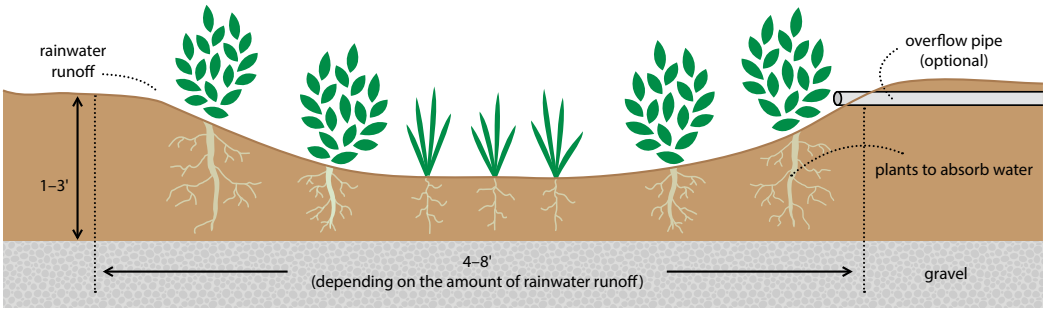
Pathway after—
with new rain garden.

At Riverside Valley Community Garden in Harlem, NYC a rain garden was installed along a pathway located at the bottom of a steep hill. The rain garden will help to control flooding along the pathway, and also prevent water from entering the sewer system.

This elongated rain garden measures 6x25′ and contains:

1. A **bowl-shaped center** dug down to about 16″ to allow water to collect;
2. A layer of **gravel** to help water percolate into the ground;
3. A **landscape fabric cover** to separate the gravel from the soil above;
4. A **border of left-over tree trunks** to help maintain the shape of the rain garden; and
5. A variety of **rain garden plants** that will help to absorb water and can tolerate both wet and dry conditions.

Once the rain garden is installed, it requires very little maintenance to do its job. As the plants grow, the rain garden will become even more efficient at absorbing excess water along the pathway.



A typical rain garden construction that can be adapted to different shapes and sizes.

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