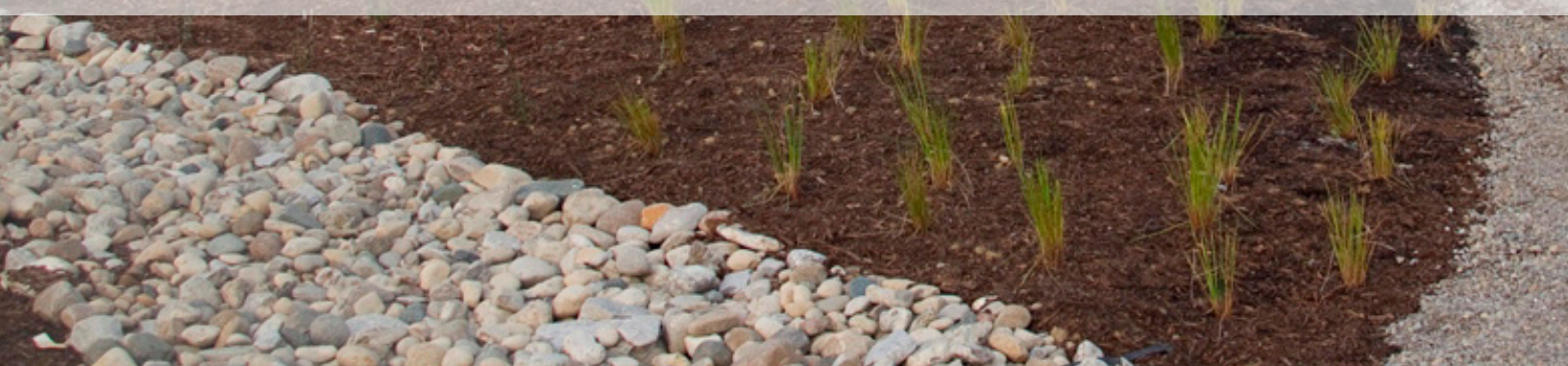




Rain Gardens for Schools

A partnership with the North Central Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition



What is a rain garden?

A rain garden is a shallow, constructed depression that is planted with deep-rooted, native plants and grasses. It is located in your landscape to receive runoff from hard surfaces like roofs and parking lots.

Rain gardens slow down the rush of water from these hard surfaces, hold the water for a short period of time, and then allow it to naturally infiltrate into the ground.

A rain garden can also be thought of as a water quality system, because it filters the runoff from your roof or lot, then uses it to recharge the groundwater.

Rain gardens are a beautiful and colorful way to help ease stormwater problems, using natural processes to help relieve flooding and pollution.

Why put rain gardens at schools?

Incorporating rain gardens, rain barrels, and other types of on-site rainwater management techniques on school property is inexpensive, environmentally sensible, and full of educational opportunities.

The installation of rain gardens and other on-site stormwater alternatives on school property can make an outdoor classroom. Beyond the actual act of capturing and treating stormwater, a rain garden can offer many teaching and curriculum activities in math, poetry, history, composition, and—of course—science.

School property is usually large, containing a tremendous amount of impervious surfaces such as rooftops, blacktop, sidewalks, and compacted soil, and can benefit greatly from an attractive, natural way to manage stormwater.



Benefits of Rain Gardens



- Absorb rainwater runoff from rooftops, sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, and playgrounds.
- *Reduce the amount of runoff and pollutants flowing into local rivers and streams from municipal stormwater systems.*
- Sustainable through drought, flood, and summer break.
- *Create habitat for local and migrating birds and beneficial insects, including butterflies.*
- Enhance community awareness of stormwater issues.
- *Create a sense of community ownership of the solutions to pollution issues.*
- Low cost of installation and maintenance.
- *Enhance the appearance of buildings.*
- Hands-on, in-the-field educational opportunities.
- *Filter local polluted stormwater on-site and improve water quality.*



Schools can be leaders in solving environmental problems, like water pollution. Children will benefit from clean water, a healthy environment, and playing a role in the solution.

The North Central Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition coordinates and collaborates on education and outreach activities, and recommends policy and operational changes for cooperating local governments in order to comply with regulations and reduce stormwater pollution in a cost effective manner so that the residents of Central Wisconsin benefit from lakes and streams that remain swimmable and fishable.



For more information, visit www.ncwrpc.org/NCWSC