



Ames Rain Garden Rebate Program

The city of Ames is implementing a Smart Watershed Program to increase local awareness of the importance of protecting our local streams and lakes. It is promoting methods to capture and infiltrate storm water in residential areas. Rain Gardens can be used in residential yards to capture and infiltrate stormwater if the soils drain properly. These gardens reduce the amount of nutrients and other pollutants entering local streams.

What is a Rain Garden?

A rain garden is a garden that captures rain from roofs, driveways and yards and is planted to native and/or horticultural flowers. It is a depression or shallow bowl made in the landscape that is level from side to side and end to end, filled with amended soil and plants. Runoff that travels to a rain garden is temporarily ponded, but it doesn't stay for long. Capturing runoff in a rain garden allows water to infiltrate into the soil rather than run into streets and storm drains. Dirty runoff that enters storm drains is sent directly to your neighborhood streams, lakes or wetlands.

Can I put a Rain Garden in My Yard?

Almost anyone that has adequate drainage in the soils in their yard could have a rain garden if the area is available along with other factors. A simple soil test must first be performed in the area being considered for a rain garden. If the soil has adequate percolation rates then a rain garden can be installed. If the soils are too clayey they may not have good percolation and therefore you would not want to install a rain garden but rather consider other stormwater best management practices such as doing soil quality restoration in your yard and/or install a rain barrel. Soil quality restoration can be done in any yard. The lawn is aerated and a thin (1/4-1/2") layer of compost is applied with seed. This can be done annually and helps to reduce compaction, increase organic matter content of the soil and therefore increase the ability of the soil to soak up stormwater.

Want to Learn More About The Rain Garden Rebate Program?

The City of Ames is offering a rebate of up to \$400 for the installation of residential rain gardens within city limits. The program is limited to the first 12 residential applicants per year. To qualify one must attend city rain garden training, either a workshop or rain garden party, and then complete the following steps:



Ames Rain Garden Rebate Program Steps

1. Attend City of Ames rain garden training.
2. Identify flat areas of your yard down slope of roof drain downspouts where gardens can be installed.
3. Contact Iowa One Call 1-800-292-8989 to have your yard flagged for utilities in these flat areas.
4. Conduct a simple soil test: percolation test and ribbon test according to the Iowa Rain Garden Design and Installation Manual
5. **If the soils don't adequately drain** then don't install a rain garden in your yard. Consider soil quality restoration and/or planting native plants in your flower gardens.
6. **If the soils adequately drain** for a rain garden then proceed with the application process.
7. Complete an application and return to the Public Works Department.
8. The Public Works Department will review the application and notify you when the application has been approved and you can proceed with construction of your rain garden.
9. Install a rain garden according to the Iowa Rain Garden Design and Installation Manual
10. **The Ames Rain Garden Rebate can be used towards the purchase of the following:**
 - a. Plants (at least 50% of the plants need to be native to Iowa)
 - b. Amended soil (50% sand, 30% compost, 20% yard topsoil-low clay content or purchase topsoil). This can be mixed by yourself onsite or delivered to your site by a local supplier. It is required to use a minimum of 6 inches of amended soil in the rain garden if choosing to amend the soil.
 - c. Edging (such as pavers, plastic, metal, or rocks)
 - d. Rental of a rototiller and/or sod cutter
 - e. Non-perforated (no slots or holes in pipe) drainage pipe
11. To get your rebate, provide a picture of the completed rain garden and receipts for the purchase materials and equipment rental to the Public Works Department.
12. A check will then be mailed to you.



APPLICATION FORM

Ames Rain Garden Rebate Program

Participant Name _____

Address _____

Utility Customer ID # _____

Phone Number _____

E-mail Address _____

Soil Test Performed?

- Ribbon Test
- Percolation Test
- Soil Analysis

Rain Garden Design:

Amount of yard, driveway, and/or rooftop runoff contributing to rain garden: _____ sq ft

Select percolation rate based on your soils: .5 in/hr 1 in/hr

Based on the desired depth 6, 8, or 9 inches determine the rain garden surface area needed : _____ sq ft

Rain garden area length _____ ft width _____ ft

Attach a copy of a site map showing location and configuration of rain garden.

Rebate: After rain garden has been installed:

- Provide Public Works with a photo of completed rain garden
- Attach receipt for native plant purchase, rain garden soil mix

Public Works Staff Application Approval _____ Public Works Rebate Approval _____



Ames Rain Garden Program **Local Plant and Soil Mix Suppliers**

Native Plant Suppliers:

Country Landscapes

56985 Lincoln Highway
Ames, IA 50010
(515) 232-6864

Blooming Prairie Nursery

Plants are ordered and delivered or stop by the nursery in Carlisle, Iowa
ph: (515) 720-8842
alt: (515) 271-9187
Brodie@BloomingPrairieNursery.com
<http://bloomingprairienursery.com/home>

Ion Exchange

Plants must be ordered and are delivered via mail or carrier.
800-291-2143
Hbright@acegroup.cc
<http://www.ionxchange.com/>

Amended Soil Mix Suppliers:

Local gardening stores carry compost, sand and topsoil that you can mix yourself

Steenhoek Environmental

Chad Steenhoek
3892 N. 500th Ave.
Ames, IA 50014
Ph: 515-203-0072
Hours: 8-5, Monday-Saturday
\$50/cubic yard, delivers in Ames area