Worcester Residential Rain Garden Training Program

June 23-24, 2011

RAIN GARDEN INSTALLATION

GETTING STARTED

- It is most effective to start the actual construction of the rain garden in the spring when the abundant rains will allow for best plant establishment and easier digging
- Summer/autumn start will also work, but the plants may need more watering until they become established

INSTALLATION STEPS

1. Remove existing grass
2. Excavate to desired elevation and grade
3. Add soil amendments

INSTALLATION STEPS

4. Prepare berm (if necessary)
5. Prepare overflow
6. Level the base (lowest area)

INSTALLATION STEPS

7. Plant native species
8. Apply mulch
9. Water plants
10. Appreciate a job well done

TOOLS & MATERIALS NEEDED

- Rakes and shovels
- Rototiller
- Wheelbarrow
- String level or survey equipment
- Measuring tape
- Triple-shredded hardwood mulch
- Plants
- Soil amendments, if necessary: fertilizer, pH adjustments (lime), coarse sand
- Optional: decorative stone, signage, seating, pipe extensions, pavers for path
- Work crew (friends, neighbors, and family)

STEP ONE

- Delineate rain garden area

- Remove existing grass with a shovel or machinery

STEP TWO

- Excavate to design depth based on necessary storage and soil amendment requirements

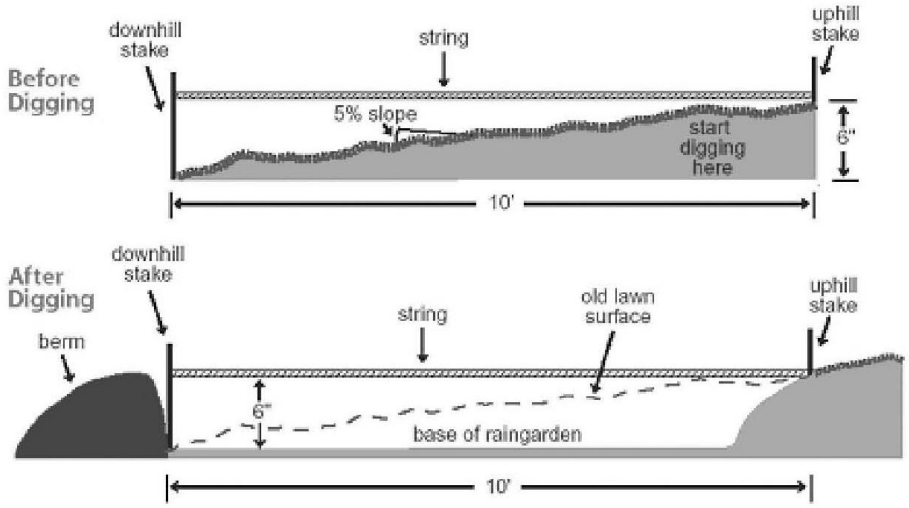
STEP THREE

- Add soil amendments, if necessary

- Combine amendments with existing soil using shovels or rototiller
- Loosen and prepare soil for grading and planting

STEP FOUR

- Prepare the berm, if necessary

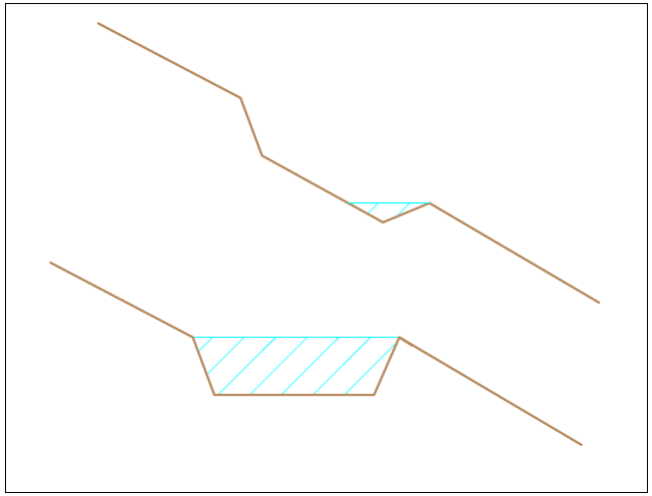


STEP FIVE

- Prepare the overflow

STEP SIX

- Level the rain garden base



STEP SEVEN

- Plant native species







STEP EIGHT

- Apply mulch

- Allow for a 3" depth mulch (triple-shredded hardwood with no dye) to be spread throughout the entire rain garden

- For every 100 square feet of rain garden, you will need about 1 cubic yard of mulch (3" depth)

STEP NINE

- Water Plants

STEP TEN

- Appreciate a job well done

INSTALLATION SUMMARY

Delineate the rain garden, using either spray paint, a rope, or a garden hose.

Remove existing grass with either a shovel or machinery. If using machinery, the heavy weight of the machinery can compact the soil. Be sure to only run the machinery along the edge of the rain garden, not directly on top of it.

Dig the rain garden to its appropriate depth based upon the soil infiltration test.

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INSTALLATION SUMMARY

Add soil amendments if necessary. Use a rototiller or shovel to combine amendments with existing soil. Loosen and prepare the soil.

Shape the rain garden bed. Create a berm and an overflow area (outlet) for the water.

Level the base (lowest area) of the rain garden to prevent ponding. Use a ruler, two stakes, and something level to check for an even surface. If the base is not level, use a rake and shovel to smooth it out.

INSTALLATION SUMMARY

Before planting, place each plant in the desired locations. Dig a hole of equal depth, but slightly wider, to the size of the container. Take the plant out of the container, loosen the roots, and plant.




Use empty plant containers to protect small plants. Apply two to three inches of mulch throughout the rain garden.


Water plants, either by installing a soaker hose or watering manually.


INSTALLATION SUMMARY

At time of installation

First growing season

Second growing season

Photos courtesy of: United States Department of Agriculture and Madeline Flahive DiNardo

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