



“Greening Up Your Yard” Workshops Announced

Grants available for rain gardens

Free drawing for rain barrel at workshops

RACINE, WI, MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2011--The Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network, in partnership with UW-Extension, will offer six *Greening Up Your Yard* workshops. The workshops are free and open to the public. **To register on the website go to: www.rootpikewin.org or call 262-898-2055.** Each workshop will feature a classroom presentations on the causes of polluted storm water runoff and the role of rain gardens, rain barrels, composting and other yard care practices to reduce polluted runoff to our streams, river and Lake Michigan. Some of the workshops also include a tour of one or more rain garden. A rain barrel will be given away at each workshop in a free drawing.

Stormwater runoff, also called nonpoint pollution, is the number one cause of pollution in our waterways today, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources says one rain garden on a quarter-acre lot can reduce annual runoff by 25 percent. Rain barrels can also reduce runoff by collecting rainwater that would normally flow through the downspout onto a paved surface, into a storm drain, and into a nearby lake, river, or wetland. Composting can help keep yard waste out of the streets where it is carried away to our waters during storm events.

Workshop Schedule

Sat., April 16, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Gateway Technical College, 3520-30th Avenue, Technical Bldg., Room T-130, Kenosha. Workshop is part of GTC's *Celebrate Earth Day Fair*.

Sat., April 23, 1:00-4:00 p.m., Pringle Nature Center, 9800 160th Avenue, Bristol. Includes tour of nearby rain garden. Workshop is in partnership with Pringle Nature Center

Sat., May 7, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Greendale Public Library, 5647 Broad Street, Greendale. Workshop is in partnership with Village of Greendale Department of Public Works

Sat., May 14, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Gateway Technical College, Racine Building, Great Lakes Room, Racine. Enter from lakeside (rear) parking lot. Includes tour of a nearby rain garden.

Sat., June 4, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., UW-Parkside Tallent Hall, Orchard Room, Somers. Includes tour of nearby rain gardens.

Sat. June 25, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., UW-Parkside Root River Environmental Education & Community Center, 1301 Sixth Street, Racine. Includes tour of nearby rain gardens.

Homeowners, businesses and organizations that want to apply for a rain garden grant are required to attend the “*How to Build A Rain Garden*” segment of the workshop. Participants will learn how to select a good site, determine its size, depth and shape, and the role of native plants, and how to plant and maintain the garden. Grants cover between 50 and 100 percent of the cost of plants and mulch for rain gardens up to 300 square feet.

Since 2008 Root-Pike WIN has funded 73 rain gardens in Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee and Waukesha counties. Together the gardens are holding and infiltrating nearly 700,000 gallons of rainwater and snow-ice melt annually, thereby keeping it out of streets and storm sewers where it carries pollutants—yard chemicals, pet waste, car fluids, yard waste—untreated to our streams, rivers and lakes.

Funding for rain garden grants has been provided by the SC Johnson Fund, E.C. Styberg Foundation, Freshwater Future, Michigan State University and the Great Lakes Protection Fund, Southeastern Wisconsin Watersheds Trust, Case New Holland, River Network, Racine Community Foundation, Wisconsin Energy Foundation, Wild Ones-Root River Chapter, and individual donors.

The Root-Pike watershed encompasses parts of Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee and Waukesha counties, where the organization and volunteers work to protect, restore, and sustain the ecosystems of the Root River and Pike River. Root-Pike WIN grew out of a group convened in 1998 by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to identify critical natural resource issues in the Root River and Pike River watersheds.

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