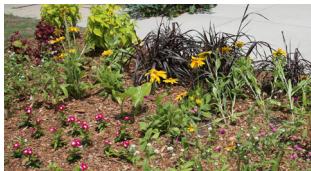


RAIN GARDEN MAINTENANCE PLEDGE

I, _____, acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to follow the maintenance guidelines provided to me by the New Hanover Soil and Water Conservation District and City of Wilmington Heal Our Waterways Program for the protection of waterways through the implementation of a stormwater solution. Maintenance is dependent upon the type of stormwater solution, but may include following watering schedules, regular weeding, clearing debris/trash, limiting use of pesticides and fertilizers, and checking pipes/connections. If I sell my property, I acknowledge that maintenance responsibility will transfer to the new owners and I will make them aware of the maintenance guidelines. I will also notify New Hanover Soil and Water Conservation District of the property transfer and provide contact information of the new owners. I also acknowledge that staff will conduct annual inspections for five years for residential properties and ten years for commercial properties after installation of the stormwater solution and I will follow staff recommendations to keep it functioning properly. I sign this maintenance agreement as a declaration of my dedication to maintain my stormwater solution in order to help mitigate the negative impacts of stormwater pollution in our waterways.

Signature: _____

Date: _____



For any questions or concerns about rain garden maintenance, please contact New Hanover Soil & Water Conservation District at:

Phone: 910.798.7130

Email: soilwater@nhcgov.com

RAIN GARDEN MAINTENANCE GUIDE



RAIN GARDEN MAINTENANCE TIPS

Congratulations on your new rain garden! You received this garden through the Heal Our Waterways program, a City of Wilmington-led initiative to improve water quality in Bradley and Hewletts Creeks. New Hanover Soil and Water Conservation District partners with the City to implement stormwater solutions for homeowners within the Bradley and Hewletts Creeks Watersheds. Remember, stormwater runoff does not get treated. Best Management Practices (BMPs), also known as “stormwater solutions”, help us slow down, spread out, and soak in stormwater before it can transport pollutants to local waterways. Rain gardens collect stormwater through their “bowl” shape and plants help to filter and soak it back into the ground. Rain gardens should drain within 24-72 hours.



MAINTENANCE TIMETABLE SUMMARY

- 1" of water every week for the first two growing seasons, then during droughts.
- Refresh mulch annually, preferably after fall or spring frost.
- Clear out trash, debris, and pet waste.
- Weed regularly.
- Prune plants annually in spring to promote growth.
- Inspect the garden annually to see if new plants are needed and confirm the garden is still draining within 24-72 hours.
- Remove and replace all of the mulch every 3 years.



WATERING

- Water in the early morning or late evening to avoid burning leaves and losing moisture to evaporation.
- If it rains, be careful not to overwater, but do water if plants still look wilted (especially during summer).
- After plants are established, water during periods of drought.



MULCHING

- Use only triple shredded hardwood mulch. It does not contain dyes and will not float when the garden is wet.
- Mulch helps retain moisture, provides nutrients, guards against weeds, and protects plants.
- Add mulch to bare areas. Exposed soil can get hard over time and does not drain well.
- Best times to mulch are after spring or fall frosts, or after pulling a lot of weeds.
- 3 inches max – don't overmulch! Too much mulch can change the drainage and absorption. Shape it like a “bowl”.
- Be careful not to bury or step on plants!
- Remove mulch from drains or pipes.
- Every 3 years, remove and replace all of the mulch. This is also a good time to remove extra sediment that has piled up over time.



WEEDING

- Please don't accidentally pull rain garden plants. Weeds are easier to identify in the spring.
- Pull out the root bulb of the weed to remove the entire plant.
- Do not use chemical pesticides as they can add unnecessary chemicals into the environment.



PRUNING

- Helps to reduce competition between plants and encourages new growth.
- Remove dead and diseased vegetation and replant as needed.
- Prune annually as needed.
- In winter, please don't remove dormant plants. Deadheads can also feed birds during winter months. Prune plants in spring to promote new growth.



MORE TIPS

- Remove debris, leaves/grass clippings/yard waste, trash, and pet waste.
- Watch out for invasive plants and remove them immediately – otherwise they may take over.
- Runoff is nitrogen-rich, so fertilizers are unnecessary.
- If areas in the rain garden are consistently experiencing erosion, consider adding LARGE decorative rocks or riprap.
- Make sure the berm (mini hill) is still in place so water doesn't immediately flow out of garden.
- Use vinegar as a natural herbicide and pesticide, if needed. Do not spray rain garden plants, as it will harm them too.



IF YOUR RAIN GARDEN IS NOT DRAINING AFTER 72 HOURS

- Check for uneven areas and rake the bottom. Rake carefully around plants to avoid damaging them.
- Standing water can also happen if the mulch and soil are compacted. Use a garden fork to loosen the soil and mulch.
- If ponding still occurs after trying the above methods, contact New Hanover Soil and Water Conservation District: **910.798.7130; soilwater@nhcgov.com**.

If you'd like more information about other stormwater solutions, have neighbors that are interested, or want to see what else we're up to, visit us at www.healourwaterways.org.

