



For Immediate Release

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Rain Gardens for Home Landscapes

Even though spring is still months away, it is not too early to think about how your garden can be the envy of your neighbors this spring. This year the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service in Cobb and the Clean Water Campaign are teaming up to provide rain garden materials and a workshop. A free "how to" workshop will take place on **January 19 at 7 PM** at the Cobb County Water Training Laboratory.

An estimated 20 percent of water consumed by the average household is used outdoors. Rain gardens allow you to reduce your outdoor water use, keep a nice garden and save the money you would have spent on water to keep your landscape green. Rain gardens work by capturing run-off from your roof or drive way and diverting it to gardens and low-lying areas to slowly soak into the soil. Rain gardens reduce the amount of storm water runoff and pollutants that enter local streams.

Rain gardens also reduce peak storm flows, helping to prevent stream bank erosion and lowering the risk for local flooding. Rain gardens are beautiful natural landscape features that require less maintenance and fewer chemicals than lawns. A rain garden receives runoff water from roofs or other hard (impervious) surfaces such as driveways. The rain garden holds the water on the landscape so that it can be taken in by plants and soak into the ground instead of flowing into a street and down a storm drain or drainage ditch. The plants, mulch and soil in a rain garden combine natural physical, biological and chemical process to remove pollutants from runoff. Many pollutants will be filtered out and break down in the soil over time.

The Cobb County Water System planted a rain garden in 2004 at the Water System Training Laboratory to set an example for the county. Attendees to the workshop can get an up close view of the rain garden in action. The rain garden was constructed through the assistance of Environmental Impact Assessment in Canton.

In order for a rain garden to be effective, it must be constructed properly. If you are uncertain about how to construct a rain garden, contact your local University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service Office or the Clean Water Campaign. The Cobb County Water System located at 662 South Cobb Drive in Marietta, GA. Registration is required. Call 770-528-1482 or visit online at www.cleanwatercampaign.com.

The Cobb County Extension Service office has DVDs and VHS tapes available for homeowners association, civic group or other organizations to borrow. If you are interested, please contact the service at (770) 528-4070. The program will also be airing on Cobb County's Government Access Channel TV-23.

*The **Clean Water Campaign** is a cooperative, multi-agency public education initiative spearheaded by local governments in metro Atlanta, supported by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District and managed by the Atlanta Regional Commission. Its mission is to build awareness of water quality problems and solutions in the Atlanta region. For more information about the Clean Water Campaign, contact Kelley O'Brien at 404-463-3259.*