



# RESIDENTIAL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

**Residential Green Infrastructure**, sometimes called low impact design or low impact development, treats rainfall as a benefit rather than a nuisance in our yards, and encourages the capture and use of rainwater on site. Common green infrastructure applications include rain gardens, pervious pavers, canopy trees, and rain barrels. Successful applications can have many benefits, including:

- Smarter, more attractive landscaping
- Reduced maintenance effort and costs
- Higher “curb appeal” and value
- Neighborhood revitalization.

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## **Our yards are connected to our waterways.**

Rainfall that soaks into the ground nourishes our landscapes and recharges the water table. Rainfall that’s allowed to run off our yards carries nutrients and other pollutants that feed algae blooms and harm aquatic life, impacting the places where we fish, swim and play.

Green infrastructure improves the beauty and value of our homes, neighborhoods, and our environment.

You’ve probably already noticed green infrastructure being used by your neighbors. Learn what’s possible for your yard ...





**A Rain Garden** is a shallow planted area that collects rainfall from your yard so it can quickly soak into the ground and be used by plants. Sapphire Shores resident and environmental consultant Jack Merriam designed a rain garden (above) to capture runoff that previously rushed down his driveway, down the street, and directly into Sarasota Bay. His rain garden nourishes a fabulous assortment of edible and flowering plants. It features a relaxing fountain and attracts butterflies and birds.



**“The great thing is there’s no one design for rain gardens. They can be anything that is part of your landscape that reduces runoff.”**

**– JACK MERRIAM, environmental consultant**

**Canopy trees and shrubs** with large leafy surfaces can intercept rainwater before it hits the ground, keeping it out of the bay.

**Rain barrels and cisterns** can capture clean rainwater and store it for irrigation, when plants really need it.

**Florida-friendly plants** grow naturally in our subtropical climate without fertilizers, pesticides and mowing. There is a huge variety of colorful choices.

**Porous pavers or shell** are beautiful alternatives to concrete. They allow rainwater to recharge our groundwater.

**Groundcover plants** like perennial peanut or sunshine mimosa create a low maintenance alternative to lawns, with no need for fertilizer, pesticides or mowing.

To learn more about residential green infrastructure and how you can get started, contact Sarasota County’s Neighborhood Environmental Stewardship Team (NEST).

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