

Master Rain Gardener Certification Course

Mission: The Master Rain Gardener (MRG) certification is offered to promote green infrastructure and enhance the quality of local watersheds in Stark County through education, empowerment, and advocacy.

Vision: Prepare individuals with the necessary knowledge to properly design and implement a rain garden within their property.

Course Syllabus

Class I – Introductions | 1.5 hour

- What is a rain garden?
- How do rain gardens work?
- Can rain gardens help solve environmental issues?
- What elements make up a rain garden?
- What are your goals?

Class II – Dig into Details | 1.5 hour

- Soils – what can soils tell us and how do they function as part of the rain garden?
- Choosing a location – Is there a “prime real-estate” for a rain garden?
- Capturing water – how do I plan for capturing runoff?
- Homework – review homework and understand next class assignment

Class III – Drafting a Design | 1.5 hour

- Sizing your rain garden – calculating the proper size
- Excavation done right – how to dig your rain garden
- Drafting a design – how-to and considerations
- Homework – review homework and understand next class assignment

Class IV – Planning and Planting | 1.5 hour

- Plants 101 – what plants are best suited for a rain garden?
- Ecological relevance – can my rain garden do more?
- Planting a rain garden – understanding the rain garden zones
- Landscape tips – what landscaping considerations should I take?
- Maintenance – what’s the maintenance of this space look like?

Class V – Field Trip

- Join us for an outing to a rain garden and native plant nursery!
- Reviewing YOUR rain garden – ask questions, ask for peer review of preliminary design, etc.

Class VI – Presentations | 1.5 hour

- Individual class presentations
- Feedback – what can you offer classmates to help their plans?

Class VII – Celebration | Optional get-together

- So you built your rain garden; how’d it go?
- What went right, what went wrong, what would you change?
- Have any extra plants? Let’s have a plant swap!

To receive certification: Individual site visits will be conducted by Stark SWCD staff to verify rain garden, collect photos and data, celebrate a job well done, and present certification metal sign.

