

Press Release:

Jasper County Health Department

July, 2013

Spring River 319 Grant Demonstration Rain Garden at Kellogg Lake

A demonstration rain garden has been developed and installed at Kellogg Lake by the Spring River Watershed Partnership in collaboration with the City of Carthage. The Rain garden was partially funded by a Section 319 Clean Water Act grant from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, and established to help improve the water quality. The main goal of the garden at Kellogg Lake is to give an example of what a rain garden is and how it works.

A rain garden is a garden of native shrubs, perennials, and flowers planted in a small depression which is generally formed on a natural slope. It is designed to temporarily hold and soak in rain water runoff that flows from roofs, driveways, patios or lawns. Rain gardens are effective in removing up to 90% of nutrients and chemicals and up to 80% of sediments from the rainwater runoff. Compared to a conventional lawn, rain gardens allow for 30% more water to soak into the ground.

A rain garden is not a water garden, nor is it a pond or a wetland. Conversely, a rain garden is dry most of the time. It typically holds water only during and following a rainfall event. Because rain gardens will drain within 12-48 hours, they prevent the breeding of mosquitoes. Also rain gardens can be developed for commercial or residential use and with a blend of native plants and some exotics can be very appealing to the eye while attracting butterflies, hummingbirds, and other wildlife. Missouri Department of conservation recommends the use of all native plants for implementation in local rain gardens. The demonstration garden seen here follows an all native plant design.

Why is Rain water Runoff a Problem?

Every time it rains, water runs off impermeable surfaces, such as roofs or driveways, collecting pollutants, such as particles of dirt, fertilizer, chemicals, oil, garbage, and bacteria along the way. The pollutant-laden water enters storm drains untreated and flows directly to nearby streams and ponds. The US EPA estimates that pollutants carried by rainwater runoff account for 70% of all water pollution.

Rain gardens collect rainwater runoff, allowing the water to be filtered by vegetation and percolate into the soil recharging ground aquifers. These processes filter out pollutants.

What is the average size and placement of a Rain Garden?

A rain garden should have an area about 20% the size of the roof, patio, or pavement area draining into it. A typical rain garden for a residential home or small building is between 100 and 400 square feet. Regardless of the size, big or small, each rain garden can make an impact.

Contacts for More information

For more information you can contact Brett Nichols or Tony Moehr at the Jasper County Health Department. The phone number is (417) 358-0480.