

Newburgh Rain Gardens

Controlling erosion and storm water runoff is required by law on new construction sites that disturb more than one acre of soil. However, when most existing urban areas were developed no such laws existed. In some cases existing developed areas can be 'retrofitted' with modern stormwater management practices. The Conservation District recently assisted the City of Newburgh and Black Rock Forest Consortium with storm water 'retrofit' projects.

Proactive water resource protection planning by City of Newburgh staff, including their GIS Specialist and Water Department Superintendant, led to the construction of three "Rain Gardens" at the City's Water Treatment plant on Little Britain Road. The Conservation District designed these stormwater management measures for the City, and they were built by Water Department staff.

This project demonstrates how the Rain Garden practice can be tailored on different sites. Newburgh's gardens reflect a more formal appearance with clean edging and three different colors of decorative stone mulch. At Black Rock, the garden blends nicely with the surrounding forest environment through use of natural rock mulch and edging, and carefully chosen locally occurring native plant species. This Project received funding assistance from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Hudson River Estuary Program.

Rain Gardens have potentially wide application - from commercial and municipal settings to residential yards both new and exciting. A "Rain Garden" internet search will yield copious information and design/construction guidance.





