

Introduction

In 2008, a rain garden installation certificate program for professional landscapers in New Jersey was developed. The program will be expanded into New York and Virginia through 2009 and 2010.

The rain garden training for professional landscapers provides the skills needed to install and maintain a rain garden and provides guidance for marketing the new service offering. The rain garden training includes in-class lectures and hands-on demonstrations, which result in the education of landscape professionals and the installation of demonstration rain gardens.

In-Class Lectures

In-class lecture topics include:

- Stormwater Regulations
- Sighting and Installing a Rain Garden
- One Call Regulations
- Rain Garden Native Plants
- Rain Garden Design
- Rain Garden Costs
- Maintenance of Rain Gardens



Gregory Rusciano, Program Associate, discusses sighting and installing a rain garden.

Hands-On Demonstration

Hands-on demonstration topics include:

- Site Preparation
- Excavation to the Desired Elevation and Grade
- Addition of Soil Amendments
- Preparation of Berm
- Preparation of Overflow
- Leveling the Ponding Area
- Planting the Native Plants
- Application of Mulch
- Watering the Native Plants



Madeline Flahive DiNardo, Agricultural Agent, discusses native plant selection for rain gardens

Resulting in the installation of a demonstration rain garden.

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"I plan to use today's information to create better residential designs and master plans which incorporate rain gardens to address the discussed water issues." - Program Participant

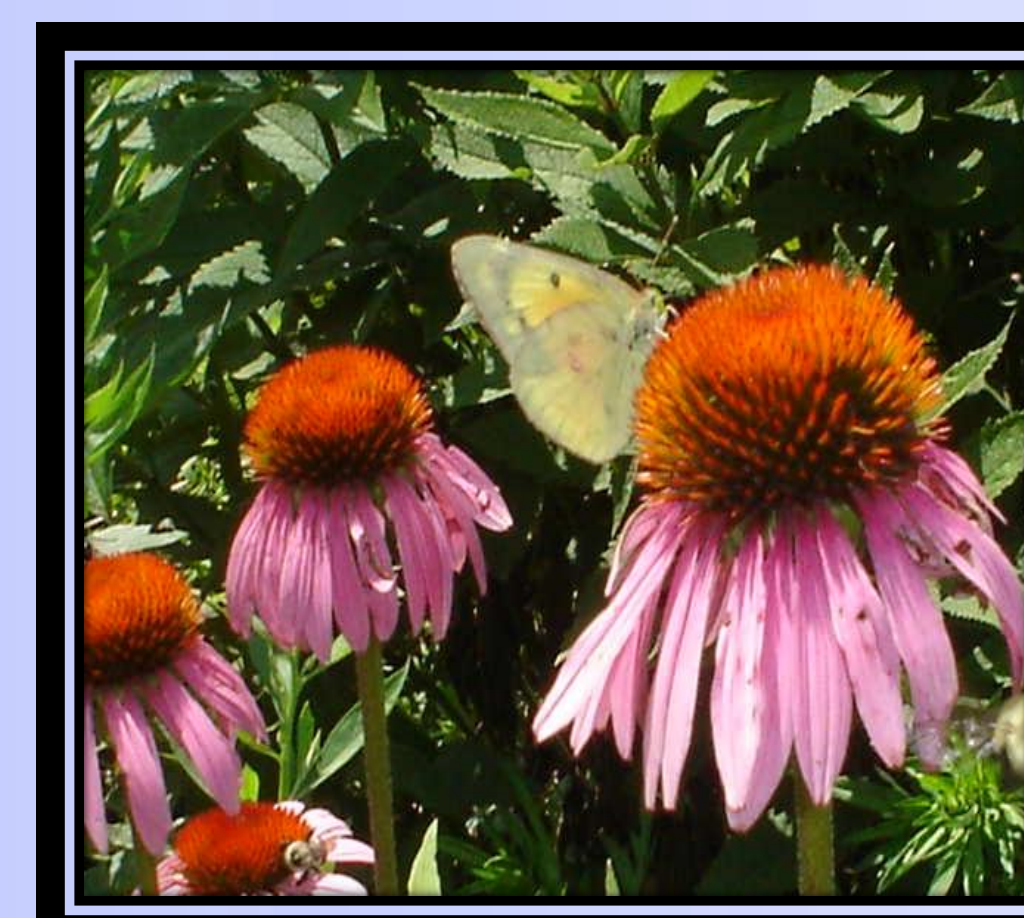


Program Participants in North Jersey



Program Participants in South Jersey

"I am looking forward to using rain gardens as much as possible. I am excited about our going green choices." - Program Participant



Program Evaluation Results

Seventy-one landscape professional training pre/post tests were completed in 2008 that consist of 10 multiple choice questions. The average pre test score was 45% and the average post test score was 84%. The results of the pre/post test are provided below:

Pre Test No. Correct Answers	Question	Post Test No. Correct Answers
47 (66%)	Definition of watershed area	43 (60%)
57 (80%)	Groundwater flow to water and wells	60 (85%)
24 (34%)	Number of days to call for utility markouts	66 (92%)
31 (45%)	Mark-out utility flag identification	67 (94%)
19 (23%)	Proper depth of rain garden	66 (93%)
16 (23%)	Amending clay soils	46 (65%)
22 (31%)	Distance to locate a rain garden from a foundation	65 (92%)
40 (56%)	Rain garden drainage rate	70 (99%)
24 (34%)	Part of the rain garden that needs to be level	39 (55%)
35 (50%)	When to fertilize native plants	67 (94%)

The most common responses to the question, "What were the three most important things learned?" were:

1. Native plant selection (25)
2. Locating a rain garden (19)
3. Installation (14)

The pre/post test had the participants rate the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree." The first statement on the pre test stated "I currently offer rain garden installation services," and the average rating was 2.24 (disagree). On the post test, the statement was re-worded to "plan to offer rain garden installation service," and the average response was 4.29 (agree). The results of the other pre/post test statements are provided below:

Pre Test	Question	Post Test
4.19	I can help prevent flooding in my community by offering rain garden installation services.	4.29
3.88	I will test soil for pH and nutrient levels prior to using fertilizers.	4.43
4.45	I will call for utility mark-outs prior to any job that requires digging, excavation, or demolition.	4.45
4.08	I will use native plant materials in my landscape designs.	4.58
2.77	I know how to choose a proper site for a rain garden.	4.52
2.48	I know how to prepare a rain garden site.	4.55
2.44	I know how to maintain a rain garden.	4.53

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