



City of Alexandria, Virginia  
Transportation & Environmental Services, Stormwater Management Division  
**Self-Certification Guide for Residential Rain Garden**

## Introduction

Residential stormwater practices, such as permeable pavement and rain gardens, help to reduce stormwater pollution that runs off impervious areas.

Functioning stormwater or landscaping practices may be eligible for a partial stormwater utility fee reduction under the City's Stormwater Fee Credit Policy. For more information regarding the credit policy, please refer to the [Stormwater Utility Fee Credit Manual](#).

## The Purpose of This Guide

This guide is intended to be used to inspect a residential stormwater practice that has already been installed on a single-family or townhouse lot. Inspecting your stormwater management practice identifies maintenance, repairs, or replacement as needed. Performing routine inspection and maintenance is required for practices to continue to function.

This guide does not replace any existing inspection requirements for stormwater management BMPs installed as a mandatory condition of development and covered by a maintenance agreement with the property owner.

## About Self-Certification

For residential townhome and single family property owners applying for stormwater utility fee credits, a self-certification stating that you have inspected your stormwater practice and observe it to be in fully functioning condition is required at the time of application. During the City's review of your application, you may be asked to complete this guide and provide it to the City.

## Instructions

**Step 1.** Complete this guide during your annual inspection.

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 2.** If asked to provide this form, it may be sent via email to [stormwater@alexandriava.gov](mailto:stormwater@alexandriava.gov) or mailed to:

Transportation and Environmental Services  
Stormwater Division  
2900-B Business Center Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22314



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## Rain Garden

Rain gardens use vegetation and soil media to aid in the infiltration and storage of rainfall and stormwater runoff. They can also aid in reducing the flow of stormwater runoff as well as reduce pollutants before entering the storm drain.

### Certification Checklist

Check the box to confirm that each item was inspected and that the practice is in functioning condition and eligible for Stormwater Utility Fee Credits:

- Side slopes are free from observable erosion or tracking of sediment into the rain garden**  
 Ensure that areas surrounding the rain garden are covered with plant growth to help slow the velocity of runoff and reduce erosion or sediment tracking and clogging in the rain garden.
- The rain garden is free of leaves, debris, and sediment**  
 Remove leaves, debris and accumulated sediment from the plant bed and inlets. These may prevent stormwater from flowing through the mulch and into the planting media.
- Plants cover the planting bed consistently and uniformly (about 75%-90% cover)**  
 A consistent and uniform planting bed helps to dissipate incoming stormwater, absorb stormwater, and reduce erosion of mulch in the planter box.
- The rain garden is free of dead plants**  
 Remove and replant dead plants. Refer to the [Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora](#) identify plants native to the region. Prune dead branches from trees and shrubs and deadhead perennials if needed to encourage blooming.
- The rain garden consists of native plant species and is free of invasive plants**  
 Native plants are adapted to local soils and climate conditions and help preserve natural ecosystems. Refer to the [Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora](#) identify plants native to the region.
- Mulch is in an un-compacted state and between 2” – 3” thick**  
 Mulch should be relatively loose and between 2 to 3 inches thick. This allows stormwater runoff to flow into the underlying soil media.
- Water that pools in the rain garden during rain events drains within 48 hours**  
 Water may pond in the rain garden during rain events. This water should drain into the mulch and soil media within the following 48 hours.

### Owner Information

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_