

Landscaping for Clean Water

Landscaping for Clean Water is a Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) program that encourages residents to create beautiful gardens to help keep our waters clean. Dakota County SWCD has been presenting classes and workshops on these topics for 19 years and to date 853 Landscaping for Clean Water projects have been installed. These include raingardens, native species gardens, native shoreline restorations, and prairie restorations. Grants ranging from \$400 to several thousand dollars are available for specific types and sizes of planting projects.

Participants in the grant and design process start by attending a free Introductory Class to learn what you can do to improve our water resources and provide pollinator habitat. When you decide to move forward, you may attend a design course that typically is two evenings. For this there is a materials fee. Additional class options available include a Shoreline Class and an Installed Project Maintenance class. A “Reimagine Your Lawn” program is available to help you change to a lower input, more ecologically sound green lawn.

The **Introductory Class** focuses on general water quality issues and provides an overview of Minnesota’s watersheds and local water challenges. Raingardens, Native Gardens, Shoreline Stabilization, and improving bee habitat are discussed. The class identifies beautiful and practical ways to reduce runoff pollutants from our yards that could contribute to water quality issues.

The **Design Classes** are sessions with Dakota County staff and expert volunteers to help you create a Landscaping for Clean Water project unique for your yard. This is an opportunity to learn from experts about site selection, site design, plant selection, raingarden installation, and adding native plants into your landscape. There is a materials fee.

The **Natural Shoreline Class** shows how a natural shoreline is installed using native plant species to protect your shoreline, beautify your property and provide habitat for both pollinators and aquatic animals. The installation process, required permits, technical assistance available, and potential grants are all covered.

The **Garden Maintenance Class** applies to raingarden, native garden, and native shoreline projects. Specific information to help you maintain and promote the health, performance, and beauty of your garden will be addressed.

The **Reimagine Your Lawn Workshop** teaches how to upgrade your lawn to one that requires less water, fertilizer and mowing. What is not to like about that?

For more information you can call: 651-480-7777 or contact: www.dakotaswcd.org/classes/landscaping-for-clean-water.