



PRESS RELEASE
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New *RainSmart* Program to Manage Stormwater in Falls Church

The Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) and the City of Falls Church announce a partnership to implement a new *RainSmart* Program to improve management of stormwater.

The *RainSmart* program provides grant funding to help City of Falls Church residents implement practices, such as rain barrels and rain gardens, that help rainwater soak into the ground on-site to prevent flooding and protect water quality locally and in the wider Chesapeake Bay watershed. The Program also includes public information and outreach programs to promote stormwater management.

An easy step that local residents can do to manage stormwater is to install rain barrels to catch runoff from roofs. Under the new program, City residents can apply for grant funds for up to two rain barrels with a limit of \$50 for each barrel. Some residents may want to use this grant at rain barrel workshops in the region sponsored by the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District (see: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/soil-water-conservation/rain-barrel>). Residents also have the option of applying for a grant to support purchase of rain barrels from another source. Residents are responsible for installing and maintaining rain barrels.

Another opportunity to improve local stormwater management is to install a rain garden that is designed to help rain water soak into the ground and help reduce high volumes of runoff that carry sediment, nutrients, and other pollutants into local streams. Under the *RainSmart* Program, City residents can apply for grant funds to cover up to 50% of the cost of a project or \$1,500, whichever is less. Grants are also available for landscape conservation projects that have stormwater benefits. These projects need to be designed and installed by contractors approved by the *RainSmart* Program.

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Funds for both rain barrel and rain garden grants are limited. Applications for rain barrels will be considered on a continuing basis until available funds for the year are committed. Applications for rain gardens and conservation landscapes require some initial design and are due by May 4th. Applications received that date will be considered and funded to the extent funds are available giving priority to projects with the greatest stormwater benefits to the community.

For more information about the program and for rain barrel and rain garden applications, go to: <http://www.vpis.org/environment/rainsmart-program/>

If you have questions about the *RainSmart* Program, send an email to RainSmartFallsChurch@gmail.com

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