



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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Contact: Jeff Peterson  
703-801-5135

## **Grants for Homeowners to Reduce Stormwater Runoff in Falls Church**

The Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) announces a new round of grants to City of Falls Church residents for projects to reduce stormwater runoff. Grants are available for projects to install rain gardens or conservation landscapes and for purchase of rain barrels to store rain water.

The grants are part of the *RainSmart* Program implemented by VPIS with support from the City of Falls Church. The Program is intended 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 take to manage stormwater is to install rain barrels to catch runoff from roofs. Under the *RainSmart* 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 this spring (see: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/soil-water-conservation/rain-barrel>). Residents may apply for rain barrel grants throughout the year and have the option of applying for a grant to support purchase of rain barrels from a commercial 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

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stormwater benefits. These projects need to be designed and installed by contractors approved by the *RainSmart* Program.

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 March 15. Applications will be considered and funded giving priority to projects with the greatest stormwater benefits to the community. Applications received after the due date will be considered if funds are available.

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

For background information on rain barrels and rain gardens, see this helpful webinar on the topic: <https://environment.arlingtonva.us/stormwater-watersheds/stormwater-at-home/soak-it-up-stormwater-workshop-for-homeowners-webinar/>

If you have questions about the *RainSmart* Program, send an email to: [RainSmartFallsChurch@gmail.com](mailto:RainSmartFallsChurch@gmail.com).

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