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## Rain gardens help catch runoff, take root in Puyallup

Puyallup: City wants to inspire residents to put them in their yards

**MELISSA SANTOS; The News Tribune**

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Kathy Buse of Puyallup was thankful for her new rain garden when a record-breaking downpour set in earlier this month.

She and six other homeowners on the 900 block of Eighth Avenue Northwest installed the gardens in late August as part of a city campaign to reduce stormwater runoff.

During the storms of Sept. 6, she and her neighbors watched their roof runoff drain into the patches of drought-resistant plants instead of flowing onto the streets and into local waterways.

“We didn’t have much water in the roadway,” Buse said. “The rain garden did its job.”

City officials partnered with a group called Stewardship Partners to pay for the rain garden installations, which can cost about \$2,000 to \$3,000 each.

David Hymel, a program manager with Stewardship Partners in Seattle, said the group is funding six rain gardens in Eatonville next May and is looking for a group of neighbors to volunteer.

Other projects the group has planned for next month include rain gardens at Roy Elementary School in Roy and Chloe Clark Elementary School in DuPont.

In Puyallup, the city’s goal is for residents to come see the seven gardens and get inspired to put them in their yards, said Tim Parham, an assistant planner for the city.

“It will definitely make a huge difference in the community if people take this practice and put in a rain garden of their own,” Parham said. “We really hope it catches on.”

The rain gardens capture water from roofs, driveways and other impervious surfaces and filter pollutants such as oil and grease, Parham said. The remaining clean water then drains into groundwater systems instead of running unfiltered into local waterways via storm drains.

Steven West, a real estate appraiser who lives on Eighth Avenue, helped organize his neighbors to participate in the project.

The street has had problems with drainage and standing water for some time, West said.

He attended a city-sponsored workshop on rain gardens earlier this year and thought they could be a great solution.

“I just like the color, the look and the whole idea,” West said. “Everyone here is concerned about water under their house and in the street.”

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