

Saving on a rainy day

Rainwater is free and pure, a tonic for plants. Here are four ways to catch and store precious winter rainfall to keep your garden lush **BY JIM MCCAUSLAND**

PLANT A RAIN GARDEN

When rain falls in Seattle, homeowner Lyn Dillman smiles: Water that used to run down the street now pools in a thickly planted infiltration basin at the garden's edge, where it percolates into the groundwater below. "It's a win-win situation," says landscape designer Malissa Gatton. "The garden helps reduce this household's environmental footprint. Anybody could do it."

If you have soil that drains well, a rain garden is a great option. Channel rainwater from the roof into a shallowly buried pipe that empties into an infiltration basin or swale at least 10 feet away from your house. Grow water-tolerant plants such as shrub willows in the basin.

DESIGN Malissa Gatton (inharmony.com or 888/472-7748)



FIRST, A COPPER RAIN CHAIN CHANNELS RAINWATER FROM THE ROOF ...

... INTO A PLASTIC CATCH BASIN AT THE BASE, HIDDEN BENEATH RIVER ROCKS.



THE WATER SPILLS FROM THE PIPE INTO A PLANTED INFILTRATION BASIN.

THE PIPE RUNS THE LENGTH OF THE CHANNEL AND UNDER A PERMEABLE PATH.

THE WATER MOVES THROUGH A HIDDEN 4-INCH-WIDE FLEXIBLE PLASTIC PIPE.