RainReady Oak Park
Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS RAINREADY OAK PARK?

RainReady Oak Park is a grant program that helps homeowners use smart landscaping to manage rain at their property. Participating homeowners will benefit from a free assessment of their yard, a customized landscape design, and a grant towards the cost of new landscaping. The program is funded by the Village of Oak Park and administered by RainReady (RainReady.org), an initiative of the non-profit Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT).

WHY IS THE VILLAGE OF OAK PARK DOING THIS PROGRAM?

The goals of the program are to:

- Reduce the burden on Oak Park's sewer system by capturing rain where it falls
- Reduce the risk of basement seepage problems by directing rain away from homes
- Provide public health and environmental benefits through nature-based solutions

WHAT ASSISTANCE WILL I RECEIVE?

You will benefit from:

- A professional home assessment to identify the best landscaping improvements to manage rain at your home.
- A landscape design and construction scope of work that you can use to get quotes from landscaping contractors.
- A grant of 50 percent of the total cost of eligible landscaping improvements, up to a maximum grant of $1,300.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

To be eligible for the program, you need to:

- Be a resident of the Village of Oak Park
- Own and live in a single-family home with a yard and disconnected downspouts (or can be disconnected)
- Have no outstanding Village obligations or building code violations
- Be able to maintain the landscaping improvements for at least three years
- Be willing to participate in program evaluation. This will be a short online survey after construction and after storms. This information will be kept confidential and used improve the program.

WHAT KIND OF LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR A PROGRAM GRANT?

- Rain Garden or Bioswale
  Let rain soak into a rain garden or bioswale that uses porous soil and water-loving plants. Rain gardens are bowl-shaped; bioswales are line-shaped.
  typical cost: $1,500 - $3,000
- Cistern or Dry Well
  Store rain in a cistern or dry well. Dry wells are below ground; cisterns are above ground.
  typical cost: $1,000
- Permeable Pavement
  Replace old concrete or asphalt with open grass pavers, interlocking permeable pavers, or permeable concrete that lets rain pass through.
  typical cost: Varies by type of pavement
- Others as approved by the Village

WHAT KIND OF LANDSCAPING IS **NOT** ELIGIBLE FOR A GRANT?

- French drain
- Tree removal
- New concrete or other impermeable surfaces

HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

1. Submit a program application. There are a limited number of grants available. If you don't receive a grant this year, you will be put on the waiting list for next year.

2. After you are selected for a grant, sign the grant agreement and pay a $200 refundable deposit towards the cost of the home assessment. The deposit is refunded with the grant reimbursement.

3. RainReady will visit your home to assess your yard, create a landscaping plan, and make other recommendations. You can use the recommended landscaping plan, or suggest an alternate plan for the Village to approve.

4. Choose your preferred landscaper. The landscaper must be registered with the Village, and should obtain a drainage permit from the Village before starting work.

5. Complete the landscaping work within 6 months of enrolling in the program, or by October 31st, whichever is sooner. Submit the Grant Reimbursement Form and the Green Infrastructure Worksheet. A Village inspector will inspect the finished work. You will receive your grant and deposit refund after successfully passing inspection.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I RECEIVE MY GRANT?

Your participation in our progam evaluation is critical to improving the program. RainReady will email you short, confidential surveys. With your permission, we may also document your landscaping with professional photography.

WHAT COSTS CAN BE REIMBURSED?

Eligible costs related to the approved landscaping scope of work include:

- Design and Engineering Services
- Labor and Equipment Rental
- Materials and Construction

Village permit fees are **waived** for this program.

Ineligible costs include:

- Watering and maintenance of landscaping
- Private construction inspection services hired by the homeowner
- Costs associated with utility staking
- Any landscaping or other work not within the approved scope of work

The homeowner will be responsible for paying the contractor in full before receiving a program grant. Project costs above the grant amount will be paid by the homeowner.

I'D LIKE TO APPLY. WHAT DO I DO?

Fill out the online application and grant agreement at (http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/3105407/RainReady-Oak-Park). The annual deadline is **April 1st**. You can also pick up a paper application at Village Hall (room 201). RainReady will review the applications and notify applicants. Eligible applicants who aren't selected will be placed on a waiting list for assistance next year. If you are selected for this year's program, we will be in touch with you to complete the grant agreement process and schedule a date for your RainReady Home assessment.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAM?

Please contact the Village of Oak Park at 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us