

Raingarden Maintenance Event Checklist for Neighborhood Leaders Working with Volunteer Groups



Preparations

1. **GATHER NEIGHBORS:** Work with your neighbors to find out what work has the greatest need for help. Request leaders who can help teach others about these needs, such as rock work, plant identification or pruning from the neighborhood, C2E or groups like Tucson Clean and Beautiful (TCB) and Trees for Tucson (TFT).
2. **FIND VOLUNTEERS:** You may request to be connected to volunteer group opportunities by requesting help from TCB or other sources.
3. **ADVERTISE:** Gain support and volunteers by posting the event with TCB, the ward office, the university, your neighborhood list serve, facebook, etc.
4. **COORDINATE WITH VOLUNTEERS:** Talk with the coordinator of the volunteer group before the event to estimate the number of committed volunteers and ask what their expectations are for the neighborhood event. Discuss the date and length of the event. Ask about the level of strength or expertise the group has on doing specialized jobs like pruning. Make sure the volunteers know to bring water bottles, hats, covered shoes and sunscreen.
5. **ARRANGE SUPPLIES:** Between your other neighborhood leaders, neighborhood volunteers and volunteer coordinator, arrange who will haul away the material from the clean-up and will provide supplies. If you've Adopted a Street or Traffic Circle, TCB will provide you with many supplies* garbage hauling.
 - shovels
 - rakes
 - clippers
 - work gloves*
 - garbage bags*
 - litter grabbers*
 - road work signs or colorful banners and color vests for volunteers*
 - table
 - drinking water
 - possibly extra rock and mulch
 - possibly wheelbarrows and buckets
 - possibly sunscreen and other refreshments or snacks
6. **VEGETATION PLANS:** Mark shrubs, trees, and annuals that you want to keep with flagging or spray paint (or mark invasive species to remove if that is easier). Keep the understory / mid-story plants to help control invasive plants. A natural and attractive looking raingarden consists of an understory, a mid-story, and an over-story of native trees, shrubs, and annuals like flowers.

Day of the Event

1. **BEFORE YOU START:** Get there early to set up road signs and other supplies. Meet the group when they arrive and talk with the volunteer leader before work begins.

2. INTRODUCTION: First, greet the volunteers and thank them for coming to the raingarden site to help with maintenance. You could also talk about how the particular site they are working on was established and the importance and benefits to having these sites in urban areas.
3. INSTRUCTIONS: Explain clearly what the group is going to do and ask if anyone has any questions.
4. ORGANIZE: If the group is large, divide them into sub groups and assign each group an area to work in or tool to specialize in. It is helpful to have a leader who can float between groups to make sure everyone has the information and supplies they need as the day proceeds.
 - TRIMMERS:
 - Trim shrubs that block the walkway or car passage back to a main stem (no stubs).
 - Keep low branches on shrubs and trees where possible to increase shade and reduce invasive weeds.
 - Conduct developmental pruning on trees older than 2 years
 - Trim older trees to remove branches sticking out in pathway or road, unless over 6 ft high
 - Remove suckers but keep multiple trunks on trees. Trim minimally but remove crossing branches. Never cut the main stem or trim into lollipop or tufted tail shapes.
 - SHOVELERS:
 - Remove weeds with a shovel (especially buffelgrass), especially from the inflow area.
 - Dig or sweep out sediment traps
 - Dig out extra sediment in the basin to increase water storage capacity and to reduce fines that clog
 - HAULERS:
 - Replenish mulch
 - Water new plants (if possible/needed)
 - Bring rock to sites that need it
 - CLEANERS:
 - Pick up litter along the whole street since it can all flow into the basins eventually
 - Clear out inflow/outflow of debris and sediment
 - ROCKWORK:
 - Repair rock layout (especially the height checkdam on the sediment trap if mulch has been floating away or sediment creeping in or any walls that became unstable)

After the Event:

- CLEAN UP: Sweep up your sidewalks, make sure the trash bags get collected and gather your tools.
- SEND THANKS: Send thanks yous to your leaders and organizations that assisted. A card signed by several neighbors is always nice.