

Dear RainWise Contractors,

Welcome to the March edition of our RainWise Contractor Newsletter! The purpose of this newsletter is to provide you with important program updates and event announcements.

Of note in this edition is the expansion of the RainWise Access Grant Program. If you are working with low-income or non-profit customers, please consider applying for this additional funding. Also included is an explanation of RainWise and Federal tax law. April 15th is coming soon! Hopefully, this explanation will help you answer customer questions.

Seattle Public Utilities and King County greatly appreciate the work you are doing to help us reduce sewer overflows and keep pollutants out of our waterways. Thank you!

Wishing you a productive spring,

Laura Cacho

Laura Cacho, Program Manager

RainWise Access Grants for Income-Limited and Non-profit Customers

Thanks to generous support from the King County Council, Stewardship Partners will be expanding the RainWise Access Grant program to all RainWise eligible basins in 2016. This program offers up to \$500 for projects with income-limited households and up to \$1,000 for non-profit-owned properties. Stewardship Partners has worked hard to make these grants simple to apply for and manage: a 1-page contract, several pathways to document eligibility, and grant payment going directly to the RainWise contractor. For more info or to apply visit: <http://www.12000raingardens.org/rainwise-access-grant> or contact Stewardship Partners at info@stewardshippartners.org or 206-292-9875.



Where is My Rebate Check?

This is probably the most common question RainWise is asked. The main reason rebate check processing gets delayed is that the rebate package is missing a form or a signature. If you are helping your customers fill out the rebate paperwork, please

double check the package for missing information. All forms need to be filled out. Chasing a missing form or signature can take a surprising amount of time, whereas a complete rebate package is frequently processed the day it is received.

ASK AN INSPECTOR

Q

I am a new contractor and will have my first post-inspection soon. Do you have any tips to help me pass this inspection the first time?

A

It is often the little things that prevent a post-inspection from passing. Do a quality check of the work before the post-inspection with enough time to fix the problems you find. Don't wait until an hour before the inspection! Here are some things to look for:

- Be sure pipes are properly glued and horizontal lines are supported every 4 feet;
- Be sure downspouts are installed and side sewers are capped;
- Be sure to bury piping from downspouts to rain garden;
- Be overgenerous with rain garden soil. Make sure berms are compacted during the summer months.

Contact Us

- For general questions about the program: rainwise@seattle.gov
- To schedule a pre- or post-inspection: inspectionrequest@seattle.gov or call 206-684-0100
- For questions about an installation or a specific property, please contact your Seattle Public Utilities or King County RainWise inspector.

Want to Meet New Customers?

We hold multiple events each month to share the RainWise program with eligible residents. You are welcome to attend these events to meet new customers and grow your business! Visit www.700milliongallons.org/events for more information.

Details on how to sign-up will be sent to you by email or contact the organizer listed to the right.

Mar. 29 at 6pm - 7:30 pm: RainWise 101 Workshop

Seattle Public Library, Montlake Branch 2401 24th Ave E, Seattle, WA 98112

Organizer: Sustainable Ballard, 206-745-2592, rain@sustainableballard.org

Apr. 3 at 11am – 2pm: RainWise Contractor Fair

West Seattle Nursery 5275 California Avenue SW, Seattle, Washington 98136

Organizer: Liz Fikejs, liz.fikejs@seattle.gov

Apr. 7 at 7pm - 8:30pm: RainWise 101 Workshop

Phinney Neighborhood Association 6532 Phinney Avenue N, Seattle, WA 98103

Organizer: Sustainable Ballard, 206-745-2592, rain@sustainableballard.org

Apr. 16 at 10am - 1pm: Barton RainWise Info Event

Brace Point Pottery 4208 SW 100th Street, Seattle, WA 98146

Organizer: Jo Sullivan, jo.sullivan@kingcounty.gov

Apr. 18 at 6pm - 7:30pm: RainWise 101 Workshop

Seattle Public Library - Northeast Branch 6801 35th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98115

Organizer: Sustainable Ballard, 206-745-2592, rain@sustainableballard.org

Apr. 23 at noon - 3pm: RainWise Contractor Fair

Rainier Community Center 4600 36th Ave S, Seattle, WA 98118

Organizer: Susan Harper, susan.harper@seattle.gov



Roof Water & Food Gardens

Customers are often interested in watering food gardens with their cistern water, but is water collected from a roof safe? It depends on the roofing material. Do not water edibles with runoff from treated wood-shake roofs or others treated with toxic agents. Other suggestions include:

- Do not collect water from the first heavy rains after a dry spell;
- Water the soil instead of pouring it on to the plant leaves;
- Clean cisterns to remove collected sediment.

For more information, read: <http://www.sightline.org/2015/01/07/a-green-light-for-using-rain-barrel-water-on-garden-edibles/>.

If you no longer want to be part of the RainWise Program, please email rainwise@seattle.gov.

RainWise Rebates and Federal Tax Law

It is tax season! You may be getting questions about the tax status of the RainWise rebate. As you should be communicating to your customers, RainWise rebates may be considered income under federal tax law; the average RainWise rebate exceeds the IRS ceiling of \$600 nontaxable benefit.

The Federal government requires RainWise rebate applicants to complete and sign IRS Form "W-9". Seattle Public Utilities and King County cannot issue a rebate without this form completed by the customer.

If a customer received a RainWise rebate check, they will receive a 1099 form at the end of the year. If they used the Vendor Payment Option (VPO), they will not receive a 1099 form as the contractor received the rebate check. However, as they received the benefit of the rain garden and/or cistern on their property, they should discuss their tax reporting requirements with their tax advisor.

Utilities, including Seattle Public Utilities, are lobbying the Federal government to change the tax status of water conservation and green infrastructure incentives. Contact your Congressional representative and U.S. Senators for more information on legislative efforts.



Spring RainWise Contractor Training - May 3, 5, & 7

Do you know someone who wants to be a RainWise contractor? Please ask them to hold these dates. More information will be coming soon!

<http://www.700milliongallons.org/rainwise/contractor-resources/>