



Contractor Resource Reference Packet

Included in this packet:

- Links (QR codes) to access online materials
- How to schedule a pre- or post-inspection
- Sample site plan
- Sample invoice
- Infiltration test & certification form
- Contractor FAQs

Questions?

Email us! RainWise@Seattle.Gov or use QR code:



Links to online materials:

Eligibility Map:



Design Specifications:



Online Rebate Calculator:

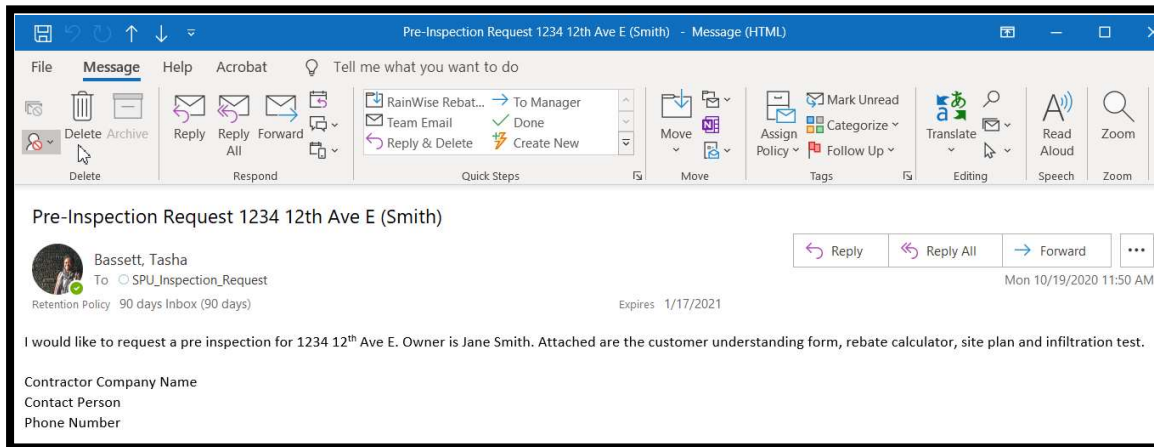


Rebate Paperwork:

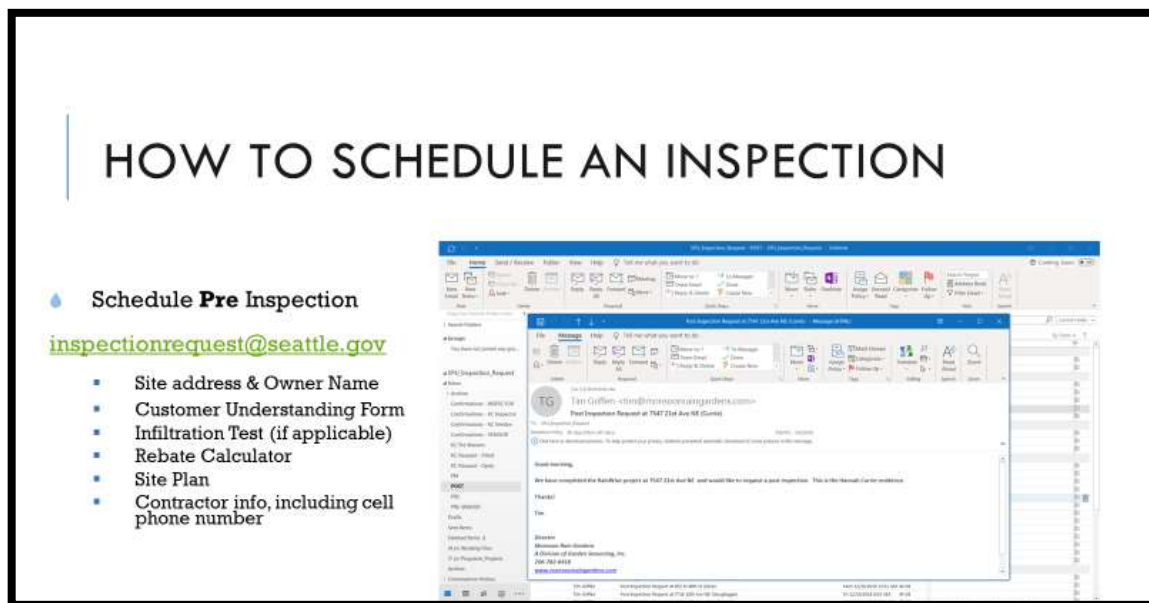


How to request a pre-inspection appointment:

- ❑ Please type in the email subject line: **Pre-Inspection Request at 1234 12th Ave E (Smith)**



- ❑ Include the following documents in your email:



The next available inspection appointment will be made for you on a specific date and time. If you are not able to make that appointment, please “decline” the appointment and indicate why. If you can make the appointment “accept” the appointment and show up at the appointment on the specific date and time.

If for any reason, you are not able to make the appointment the DAY OF the appointment. Please call the inspector and email the inspectionrequest@seattle.gov to let us know.

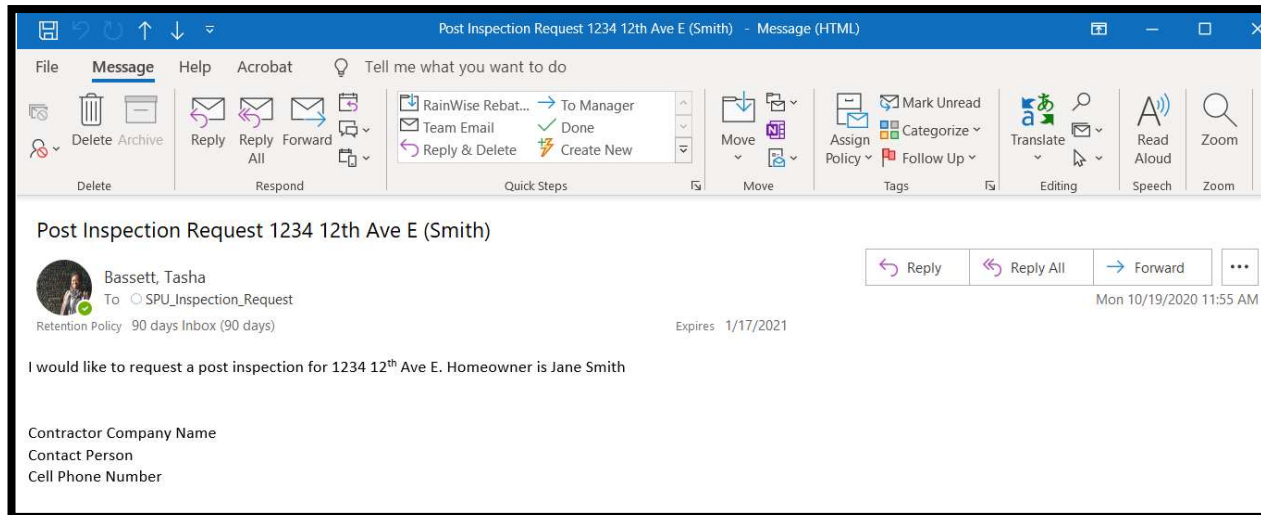


How to request a post-inspection appointment:

No documents needed unless there has been an update of the plans from the feasibility or pre-inspection.

Email the inspectionrequest@seattle.gov.

☐ Please type in the email subject line: **Post-Inspection Request at 1234 12th Ave E (Smith)**



The next available inspection appointment will be made for you on a specific date and time. If you are not able to make that appointment, please “decline” the appointment and indicate why. If you can make the appointment “accept” the appointment and show up at the appointment on the specific date and time.

If for any reason, you are not able to make the appointment the DAY OF the appointment. Please call the inspector and email the inspectionrequest@seattle.gov to let us know.





Invoice Cost Breakdown

Please attach this to your regular invoice as part of the rebate package. This allows you to invoice your client according to your existing billing template while allowing us to be accountable to our ratepayers.

Only items directly related to the function of a rain garden or cistern installation should be included on your invoice and this accompanying form.

Category	Description	Quantity	Rate	Total
Administration		In hours		
	Client meetings			
	Design			
	Infiltration testing			
Labor	Rain Garden related	In hours		
	Site prep			
	Construction and planting			
	Cistern related	In hours		
	Site prep/Pad construction			
	Plumbing and conveyance			
	Changes to gutters or downspouts			
Materials	Conveyance piping	Lineal feet		
	Connectors (total cost, no need for individual quantities/rates)	Number of units		
	Open conveyance (specify materials/liner/rock and note lineal feet of channel)			
	Cistern base construction materials (specify type of construction and total cost)	By type (curbed gravel, block, concrete, etc.)		
	Plants (number and size of plant materials grouped by size)	By stock size		
	Bioretention soil	Yards		
	Mulch	Yards		
	Gravel/rock	Yards		
	Cistern cost per cistern (*note, no mark up allowed on SCC supplied cisterns, you may charge actual delivery costs)	Per unit		
	Cistern plumbing connection (includes first flush diverter, low flow orifice, tank to tank connections, etc.)	Total costs no need for individual quantities/rates		
Rentals	Specify equipment	Hour/day (specify)		
Fees	Disposal fees by item (soil, clean green, etc.)	Yards		
	Delivery fees if not covered by labor(specify items, cistern, rock, etc.)			
Total				\$



Seattle
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Utilities



King County

Infiltration Test & Certification

This test will help determine, 1) If soil conditions are suitable for a rain garden and 2) The size of garden.
If you have questions while executing this test, contact your contractor with questions.

Site Address: _____

(Use one certification form per rain garden.)

On-Site location (For multiple rain gardens, i.e., SW or NE): _____

Test Preparation:

- **Call before you dig!** Dial 811 for free utility pipeline location.
- Dig a hole **24 inches deep** and **at least 10 inches across**.
- Add a stake with a ruler attached and set the bottom of the ruler at the bottom of the hole. Duct tape works to attach the ruler.
- **Fill and drain the hole 2 times** to saturate the soil.
- **Each fill should be performed within 2 hours of the previous fill.**
You are mimicking the saturated condition of the soil during the rainy season.

Cautionary Note:

Any one of the following conditions **disqualify** site for a rain garden:

- * *hit hard pan soil*
- * *hole fills with water*
- * *test hole does not drain at least .25" per hour*

Infiltration Test & Certification Form: (check all boxes)

A. Upon digging hole, did you hit hard pan? (hard pan is like concrete)

Yes No

B. Upon digging hole, did the hole fill with water?

Yes No

If you answered "No" to A. and B., continue test.

1. Fill the hole (1st fill) to the **12-inch mark**. Done Not Done

2. Let the hole drain completely. Done Not Done

3. Fill the hole again (2nd fill) to the **12-inch mark**. Done Not Done

Let the hole drain completely and **record** duration of time
hole drains: Amount of time to drain: ___hrs. ___mins.

5a. Fill the hole again (3rd fill) to the **12-inch mark**. Done Not Done

5b. Record number of inches water has fallen in 1 hour: _____ inches



Be as accurate as possible!

5c. Record number of inches water has fallen **from hour 1 to hour 2:** _____ inches

If hole is already empty, refill hole (4th fill) and skip to step 5e. (use the 15 minutes table).

5d. Record next entries on appropriate table. Determine which table and interval to use, by following these guidelines. **Select appropriate interval with a check:**

>3" per hour fall, check at 15 minute intervals = Table 1

3" to 1" per hour fall, check at 30 minute intervals = Table 2

<1" per hour fall, continue to check at hourly intervals = Table 3

5e. Now measure the fall of water 3 more times on selected table below:

If hole empties prior to given time interval, refill and continue recording.

TABLE 1 (15 MINUTES)		
Time (15 min duration)	Ruler Reading (Inches)	Hole Refilled 12" (Yes or No)

TABLE 2 (30 MINUTES)		
Time (30 min duration)	Ruler Reading (Inches)	Hole Refilled 12" (Yes or No)

TABLE 3 (1 HOUR)		
Time (60 min duration)	Ruler Reading (Inches)	Hole Refilled 12" (Yes or No)

6. Contractor calculation of infiltration rate: _____ inches per hour

≥ 0.25 in/hr: use 0.25 RG size in table & replace soil with 'Bioretention' soil mix

≥ 0.5 in/hr: use 0.5 RG size in table & replace soil with 'Bioretention' soil mix

≥ 1.0 in/hr: use 1.0 RG size in table and replace soil with 'Bioretention' soil mix

> 1.0 use 1.0 in/hr RG size in table (You may not make your rain garden size smaller)

Signatures are required and must be included with your rebate materials, to be eligible for a RainWise Rebate.

I certify that I have followed the procedures outlined in this document to determine my rain garden sizing. I have chosen to size my rain garden in accordance with these results. I understand that rain gardens are sized for moderate rain events and that regardless of infiltration ability of my soil that my rain garden must have a clear and safe overflow path according to RainWise program details.

Certification Test Performed by:

Homeowner or Contractor Print Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Infiltration Rate Calculated by:

Contractor Print Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Contractor Frequently Asked Questions:

1) Can I use the RainWise logo on promotional materials?

Yes, the RainWise logo is available for use by businesses with at least one person who has completed the RainWise program training. Email rainwise@seattle.gov if you need the logo!

2) Where do I find the minimum design requirements for rain gardens and cisterns?

RainWise qualifying specifications can be found in “Design Specifications” at https://700milliongallons.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/2025_RainWise_Design-Specs_Final.pdf. These are minimum specifications that provide a level of functionality appropriate to stormwater control goals. You may exceed these specifications in both performance and aesthetics if you and your client wish to, though the rebate might cover a lesser proportion of the total cost.

3) How do I update my vendor profile on the RainWise website?

Fill out the RainWise Contractor Form at <https://tinyurl.com/rwcontractorform>.

4) Can I post pictures of my rain garden or cistern installations?

Yes! We can add up to eight photos plus a profile photo to your contractor profile on the “Find a Contractor” website. Fill out the RainWise Contractor Form at <https://tinyurl.com/rwcontractorform> to update your contractor profile. You can post as many photos as you want on your website and/or social media.

5) May I link my business website to the RainWise website?

Yes! Feel free to link to or promote the link to the RainWise websites.

6) May I promote my business in the target CSO basins?

Please do! While the City will do some outreach involving mailings, posters, and advertising related to the program, you are welcome to reach out to residents letting them know about the program in any promotional efforts you wish to undertake.

7) How long does it take SPU to send a rebate check to vendors/customers?

Rebates can take up to 60 days (or 8 weeks).

8) Can I have the rebate check sent to me?

Yes, a Vendor Payment Option (VPO) is now available. Participating property owners must sign the form in order for the rebate check to be sent directly to the contractor. Refer to the VPO form on the Contractor Resources page: <https://700milliongallons.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Vendor-Payment-Option-Form.pdf>

9) My customer has a basement, but also has a porch on a post and pier foundation, what should I do about setbacks?

The rain garden should be placed to meet setbacks for both types of structure. For the basement, infiltration is prohibited within setback distance 2 times basement depth (measured from basement floor to grade), minimum 10 foot setback, PLUS it should be at least 5 feet away from the porch.

10) RainWise Reference Sheet C states that no more than 1,000 sq ft of contributing impervious surface may be directed to overflow across a sidewalk at a single location. If there are two rain gardens in the front yard separated by a paved walkway into the house, is that two systems or one?

Each rain garden counts as one system and each can take 1000 sq ft. If the systems are both on the same side of the house—the front yard, for example—their outflows must be separated by 10 feet.

11) Can the conveyance furrow from the house to the rain garden go over or under a paved walkway that runs between the house and the sidewalk?

The conveyance channel must be a direct conveyance to the receiving rain garden. Sheet flow over a sidewalk would obstruct the flow so you either have to pipe under the walkway or cut the walkway, install a rock conveyance or channel and cover with a grate. See Sheets 3 and 4 of the RainWise design details for guidance.

12) Can my rain garden or conveyance channel overflow to the sidewalk?

Your overflow structure, including “dispersion trench” as shown in the figure on RainWise Reference Sheet C, must be a minimum of 3 feet from a sidewalk or alley. This allows the overflow to spread out and sheet flow instead of point discharging and degrading the sidewalk or alley.

13) Can rain chains be used instead of downspouts?

They can be used as conveyance to rain gardens but not cisterns. Rain chains are rebate-able only up to the price of an equivalent, traditional downspout. RainWise recommends stainless steel rain chains over other alternatives like those made from copper or other metals which are harmful to aquatic life.

14) If an address is eligible for "Cistern to side sewer only" does that mean they still need to do a percolation (perk) test?

No, perk tests are only necessary for RainWise projects that infiltrate the soil. A new or changed side sewer connection requires an additional permit, permit fee, and inspection from the Seattle Department of Construction & Inspections.

15) Are time and materials to move irrigation lines that are in the way of a rain garden covered by the rebate?

We would pay for the labor to install a rain garden or conveyance that might uncover irrigation lines, however we would not pay for the re-routing or for the re-installation of irrigation lines uncovered when installing a rain garden since we don't pay to reroute water or gas lines. Instead we ask the contractor to re-site or have the homeowner arrange rerouting at their cost. Another example, site preparation involving the removal of part of a patio equal to the rain garden footprint would be covered. Removing the whole patio would not.

16) There's an eligible RainWise property that backs up to a city park (no alley). Can the rain garden and cistern overflow to the park? It is conveniently sloping that way.

No, overflows must be directed to the right of way. We can't direct drainage to other property, even City of Seattle parks. Overflows must go to the right of way with a clear path to formal drainage or connect directly to the drainage system. You could potentially install a bird cage overflow and pipe the overflow to the front yard.