



RBC
Blue Water
Project™



Growing Blue

Protecting water in our growing towns and cities

TIPS FOR YOUR BLUE WATER COMMUNITY MAKEOVER

Have you ever wondered where all the water goes when it rains, or after the snow melts? Some of it seeps into the ground or evaporates, but after a storm, most water runs over the land, racing across paved surfaces and down storm drains. Along the way, it picks up litter, sand, bacteria, oil and other chemicals; and carries these pollutants right into our streams, ponds, rivers, lakes and wetlands. That's not good for anyone.

No matter where you live, you can help protect your local water sources by doing a "Blue Water Makeover." Here's how:

"Blue" your house and yard

- Disconnect your downspout
- Use a rain barrel to collect water for gardens
- Construct a rain garden
- Install permeable paving on your driveway, or make paved areas as small as possible
- Plant trees or a garden — Select native, non-invasive plants. Their deep roots will help reduce rainwater runoff.
- Undertake a green home audit to identify ways you can reduce water and energy use

"Blue" your apartment

- Grow a balcony garden for food and colour
- Start a community garden
- Plant trees to cool and clean the air and reduce stormwater runoff
- Encourage your building management to install permeable paving on driveways and parking lots
- Construct a green roof where possible
- Use low-flow toilets, shower heads and taps to reduce water use and save energy
- Pick up litter in your neighbourhood

"Blue" your street and driveway

- Plant native, urban-environment-tolerant trees to shade and reduce the "urban heat island effect"
- Make paved areas as small as possible
- Replace asphalt driveways and parking lots with permeable paving
- Use less road salt or no salt to protect our creeks and lakes
- Pick up litter

"Blue" your school

- Reduce paved areas to promote infiltration
- Install permeable paving on driveways and parking lots
- Plant native trees and shrubs to create shade and reduce runoff
- Start a native wildflower community garden featuring spring and fall blooms
- Collaborate with nearby schools to initiate community greening projects
- Construct a green roof where possible

The RBC Blue Water Project™ is a 10-year, global commitment to help protect the world's most precious natural resource — fresh water. In 2013-2014, the RBC Blue Water Project will focus on supporting initiatives such as improved management of storm and rain water systems, protection and restoration of urban waterways and improved urban water quality, to help protect and preserve water in towns, cities and urbanized areas.



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Tips courtesy of TRCA's Highland Creek Neighbourhood Greening Plans (2011).