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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New grant program to help Wilmette get RainReady

WILMETTE, IL. – (February 21, 2019) – Residents interested in making their yards eco-friendly can benefit from a new program being offered by the Village and qualify for a grant to pay for half the cost of the sustainable landscaping. The Village is pleased to announce the new program, RainReady Wilmette, which aims to reduce the amount of rain that enters the Village's sewers, improve yard drainage at homes, and benefit the environment by using less resources like water and energy.

Each participating homeowner will receive a free assessment of their yard, a customized landscape design, and a grant of up to 50 percent of the cost of sustainable landscaping. The maximum grant amount is \$1,300. Participating homeowners can select the landscaper of their choice to perform the work.

Eligible types of landscaping improvements for a grant include rain gardens and bioswales, which use porous soil and water-loving plants to absorb water. Dry wells and permeable pavement can also be covered through the grant. Examples of landscaping that are not eligible for a grant include tree removal and new hardscape work like paths and walls.

Eligible applicants must be residents of Wilmette who own and live in a single-family home with a yard. Participants should be able to disconnect downspouts and sumps from the municipal sewer system. Applicants must also have no outstanding Village obligations or building code violations, be able to maintain the landscaping improvements for as long as they own the home, and be willing to participate in an evaluation of the program. Selected participants must pay a \$200 refundable deposit toward program costs, which is refunded if the landscaping work is completed by Sept. 30, 2019.

Applications are now being accepted for 25 grants through RainReady Wilmette. Residents can apply for the program online <https://www.cnt.org/projects/rainready-wilmette> or pick up a paper application from Village Hall. The deadline to apply is March 31, 2019. While only a limited number of grants are available, applicants who aren't selected this year will be put on a waiting list for the future.

The program is funded by the Village of Wilmette and administered by RainReady, an initiative of the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT).

For more information about the program, contact Jorge Cruz, Assistant Village Engineer at cruzj@wilmette.com or 847-853-7623. A comprehensive list of answers to frequently asked questions about the RainReady Wilmette program is available at wilmette.com/green-initiatives/rainready/. The complete program terms will be posted online.

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