Description – Percolation Test

Water in a hole method:

- Dig a hole about 6 – 8 inches deep at the rain garden site and fill the hole with water.
- If the hole drains in less than 24 hours, your soil is probably suitable for a rain garden
- If the hole does not drain in less than 24 hours, select another site. Alternatively, you might consider contacting a landscape architect.

Water in a can method:

- Remove the ends from a 46-ounce can (this is equivalent to a large can of juice)
- Mark a line 2 inches from one end. Using this delineation, insert the can 2 inches into the ground.
- Pour one quart of water into the can.
- Depending on how many minutes it takes for the water to drain, you may or may not have suitable soils for a rain garden (see chart below).

Drainage Time	Soil Porosity	Drainage Conditions
Less than 4 minutes	Excellent percolations and air circulation.	This soil offers the best drainage conditions for planting a rain garden.
4 to 10 minutes	Somewhat compact or dense soil.	Acceptable drainage for a rain garden but slower; may need to aerate or augment soil.
Over 10 minutes	Overly compact or dense.	Very poor drainage. This soil offers the most challenging conditions. Must augment soil, mill aerate.

Source: Rain Gardens in Maryland's Coastal Plain, Worcester County Department of Comprehensive Planning