



Free Native Plants for School and Community Projects

Summer 2021 Application

The Dane County Land and Water Resources Department has a limited supply of **free** native plants for use in school or community projects that benefit water quality and education. These plants will be available in spring and fall each year. Spring plants are donated from community members through the Plant Dane native plant program and fall plants are grown by local volunteers.

How to Participate

The quantity of plants is limited and priority will go to projects that demonstrate an educational and/or water quality benefit. Plant recipients must fill out this application and email it to sandford.susan@countyofdane.com. Acceptance of this application does not necessarily mean the project will receive all of the requested plants.

Commitment

The native plants come in plug trays and should be kept moist until planting. Once in the ground, plants will need watering and care until their roots become established. Plant recipients will also be asked to write up a short summary of how the plants were used and to provide photos so we can share them with the volunteer plant growers.

By submitting this application, you are agreeing that if you receive plants you will:

- Use the plants for the purpose described on the application
- Water and care for the plants during the first few years while their roots are becoming established.
- Provide a short write up and photos to Dane County after the project is complete.

Things to Consider Before you Apply

Sites that pond water or have poor drainage may not be able to support the plants provided by this program. If you have any questions or concerns about whether or not your site is appropriate for native plants or a rain garden, please contact us before submitting this application.

Application Deadlines

The **summer** application deadline is July 20, 2021. Plants will be available for pickup in early to mid August.



If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact:

Susan Sandford Strategic Engagement Coordinator
sandford.susan@countyofdane.com
(608) 669 1816

Pre-Application Steps

Drainage Test



Dig a one foot hole in the area where you plan to install the rain garden and fill the hole with water. You may want to add a wooden stick with a line on it or a yardstick in the hole so you can measure drop in water level.

Wait a minimum of four hours and measure how much the water level has fallen. For a rain garden site, there should be a 2 inch drop in water level after 4 hours (or 3 inches in 6 hours, 4 inches in 8 hours, etc.)

Soil Test

1. Collect a few teaspoons of soil from 4-6 inches beneath the surface (can be from your drainage test hole).
2. Place soil in your hand and moisten with water until the soil reaches a consistence that is moldable, like putty. Knead the soil to mix in the water.
3. Form the soil into a ball (if it falls apart and won't form a ball, the soil is sandy and fine for a rain garden)
4. Place the soil ball between your thumb and forefinger. Gently pushing the soil with your thumb, squeeze the soil upward into a ribbon. Form a ribbon of uniform thickness and width. Allow the ribbon to emerge and extend over your forefinger until it breaks from its own weight. (see example in this video if you need help)



If the soil makes a ribbon greater than 2 inches before it breaks your soil is primarily clay and the location is not suitable many native plants.

If your site doesn't pass these tests...

If your site does not pass the soil or drainage tests you may still be able to install a wetland garden but we do not have plant suitable for this through Plant Dane. You may also have larger drainage issues that cannot be solved with native plants and requires an engineering solution. We recommend consulting with an expert if you are having major water issues on your site.

Application for Native Plants

Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Community Group or School Affiliation: _____

Project Location (approx. address): _____

How many total plants would you like?: _____

(A good rule of thumb is one plant for every 1-1.5 square feet)

**Are you working with a professional landscaper or native plant expert to design your garden?
If so, who are you working with?**

Brief description of the project and how the plants will be used?

(Please include a description of any educational and or water quality benefits)

Plants Needed: *This information will help us select appropriate plants. Select all that apply.*

Suitable for:

Rain Gardens  Pollinators  Butterflies/Birds 

Sun requirements: Full Sun Partial Sun Shade

(Most native prairie plants need at least partial sun—we only have a few species that will tolerate shade)

Soil moisture: Wet Medium Dry

Height: < 4 feet 4 - 6 feet > 6 feet No height preference

Please Return this form to:

Susan Sandford - Strategic Engagement Coordinator
sandford.susan@countyofdane.com — (608) 224-3617