

## Protecting Water Quality with Rain Gardens

We East Amwell residents all rely on private wells for our source of water. In an effort to monitor water quality, the East Amwell Environmental Commission (EAEC), in cooperation with Raritan Headwaters, offers residents an annual opportunity to check the quality of our well water.

But have you wondered about the source of your well water and what you can do to improve its quality? Your well water comes from groundwater supplied by precipitation, which falls within your watershed\*. To help you locate your watershed, Doug Schleifer, an EA resident, has created an EA watersheds map, which is available at:

<http://www.eastamwelltownship.com/EC-agendas-minutes/EastAmwellHydro-3.pdf>

\*A **watershed** is the area of land where all of the water that falls in it and drains off of it goes to a common outlet.

A way in which each resident can minimize pollution of groundwater is to prevent stormwater runoff. An effective method is to build rain gardens to collect, retain, and purify precipitation before it can become runoff.

The benefits of rain gardens are many. They:

- Reduce flood
- Remove pollutants
- Replenish ground water
- Provide native plant habitat for wildlife
- Enhance the beauty of yards

Now, thanks to a 2017 grant from DEP to the North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development (NJ RC&D), East Amwell residents in the Back Brook area (see the above EA watershed map) are eligible to obtain a free rain garden! NJ RC&D will work with you to design your rain garden and build it for you. In return, you commit to its maintenance.

To determine if you qualify and for more information, please contact the NJRC&D watershed coordinator at: [neshanic@northjerseyrcd.org](mailto:neshanic@northjerseyrcd.org) or 908-573-5368. The EAEC also can help answer any questions you may have. Call any of us; we are listed at the East Amwell Township website.

– East Amwell Environmental Commission