



## ***PRESS RELEASE***

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### **Dakota County Soil & Water Conservation District Anticipating Another Year of Record Participation in *Landscaping for Clean Water Program***

Dakota County, MN – The Dakota County Soil & Water Conservation District, a local government unit, is a resource for those interesting in partnering for soil and water conservation.

One of their programs for Dakota County residents is the *Landscaping for Clean Water* program, which includes free educational workshops, hands-on design classes, assistance at site visits, and grants for homeowners. The goal of the Landscaping for Clean Water program is to teach residents how to beautify their yards while also protecting local water quality and providing habitat for pollinators.

These goals seem to resonate with Dakota County residents: participation in this program has been skyrocketing over the past two years. In 2018, the number of raingardens and native pollinator gardens installed through the grant program was 33% higher than in 2017 and 74% higher than in 2016.

Registration is now open for the 2019 introductory workshops (residents must attend one of these to gain access to the hands-on design courses and reimbursement grants.) Many courses are expected to sell out this year, so pre-registration is important. Workshops are open to anyone, no matter where they live. The public can learn more and register online at the Dakota SWCD website: [dakotaswcd.org/cleanwater.html](http://dakotaswcd.org/cleanwater.html).

**Interview Contacts:** Contact Liz Dengate to be connected with a homeowner from a specific city who has completed the LCW process: [liz.dengate@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:liz.dengate@co.dakota.mn.us); 651-480-7717. A few selected **quotes** from homeowners are included on the following page.

**Photos:** See attached.

## Quotes from Homeowners

"I was intrigued by the idea of a raingarden and the benefits that it provides to the environment. The fact that there are classes to assist in the implementation of the garden AND a grant when it was completed cemented the deal! My raingarden was completed late summer (2018) and there were several rainy days for it to perform its magic! Everyone in the family would look at the garden in awe as it filled with water."

- Julie, South St Paul resident, LCW 2018 participant

"The whole process was very rewarding. I enjoy learning new skills and take pride in making the area around my home look nicer while being more environmentally friendly...I'm excited to see (the raingarden) continue to flourish. In one summer the plants got huge! It'll be fun to see what it looks like in 2019, and it will be a source of pride in the future to think back upon the whole experience as we see the garden mature and serve its functional purpose."

- Anthony, Burnsville resident, LCW 2018 participant

"I was interested because I care about the environment and I believe we need to take care of it for ourselves and future generations. It sounded to me as the right thing to do. I love MN, all the lakes, and all the beauty that encompasses it."

- Giti, Eagan resident, LCW 2018 participant