

# Pinckney garden aims to improve water quality



Advanced master gardener Roseann Krul, left, and Pinckney Garden Club member Lydia Bangert install a sign identifying the new rain garden in front of Pinckney Village Hall. / ALAN WARD/DAILY PRESS & ARGUS

Written by

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A new rain garden outside Pinckney Village Clerk Amy Salowitz's window appears to be a nice collection of flowers and shrubs.

But the installation, an effort from volunteers of the Pinckney Garden Club, the Livingston County master gardeners Program and the Washtenaw County master rain gardeners program, is more than that.

"The whole point is to **improve** water quality in the river — in this case, the Huron River," said Susan Bryan, rain garden coordinator for the Washtenaw County drain commissioner's office.

Water-loving plants in the specially designed rain garden are expected to absorb and filter 85 percent of storm runoff that normally would be sent straight to drains, thus decreasing pollutants directed into rivers by that amount, Bryan said. The rainwater will accumulate into pools, designed to be 3-6 inches deep.

Pinckney Village Hall's runoff previously soaked into its lawn and ran into a drain in its parking lot, accumulating heavy metal, oil, sediment and other pollutants on its way. Those contaminants are eventually dragged into the Huron River, Bryan said.

Ann Jarema, director of the Pinckney Garden Club, said she had the idea to spearhead the creation of the rain garden after she attended a class through Washtenaw County.

"I want it to become an educational piece, and a demonstration for the neighborhood," she said.

Out-of-pocket costs for Jarema were expected to be not much more than \$100, after donations from Ed Bock Feeds and Stuff, Three Dogs Nursery and area gardeners.

The project will allow Patrick Reed of Ann Arbor-based Reed Ecological Designs to fulfill his master rain gardener certificate.