



# know your

# ROOTS

## **WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?**

The dense clay soils in our region make it difficult for water to quickly soak into the ground. The area's native plants have deep root systems that can increase soil's ability to absorb and retain water. As native, natural vegetation has been replaced with popular turf grasses, less stormwater can be absorbed into the ground, leading to more runoff and water pollution. Common pollutants found in stormwater runoff include lawn chemicals, pet waste, household chemicals, motor oil, and soaps used for car washing.

## **WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

Attractive and easy-to-maintain landscaping features can reduce the amount of runoff from roofs, driveways and lawns. Steps you can take include:

- **Redirect your downspouts.** Strategically placed downspouts help irrigate gardens
- **Reduce the amount of turf grass in your yard.** Replace exotic species with garden beds that have native plants, or with drought-tolerant native grass like buffalo grass.

Native plants require very little maintenance, which saves homeowners time and money. Native plants have adapted natural defenses to local conditions such as drought, soil conditions, disease and insects which can be problematic to non-native species. Native plant gardens also attract more native songbirds and butterflies to your yard. Enjoy the benefits of a native landscape!

For more tips on how you can improve  
water quality in your community, visit  
[www.marc.org/water](http://www.marc.org/water).



**Clean Water. Healthy Life.**  
Regional Water Quality Education Program