

# Use stormwater at your home

Help protect our waterways

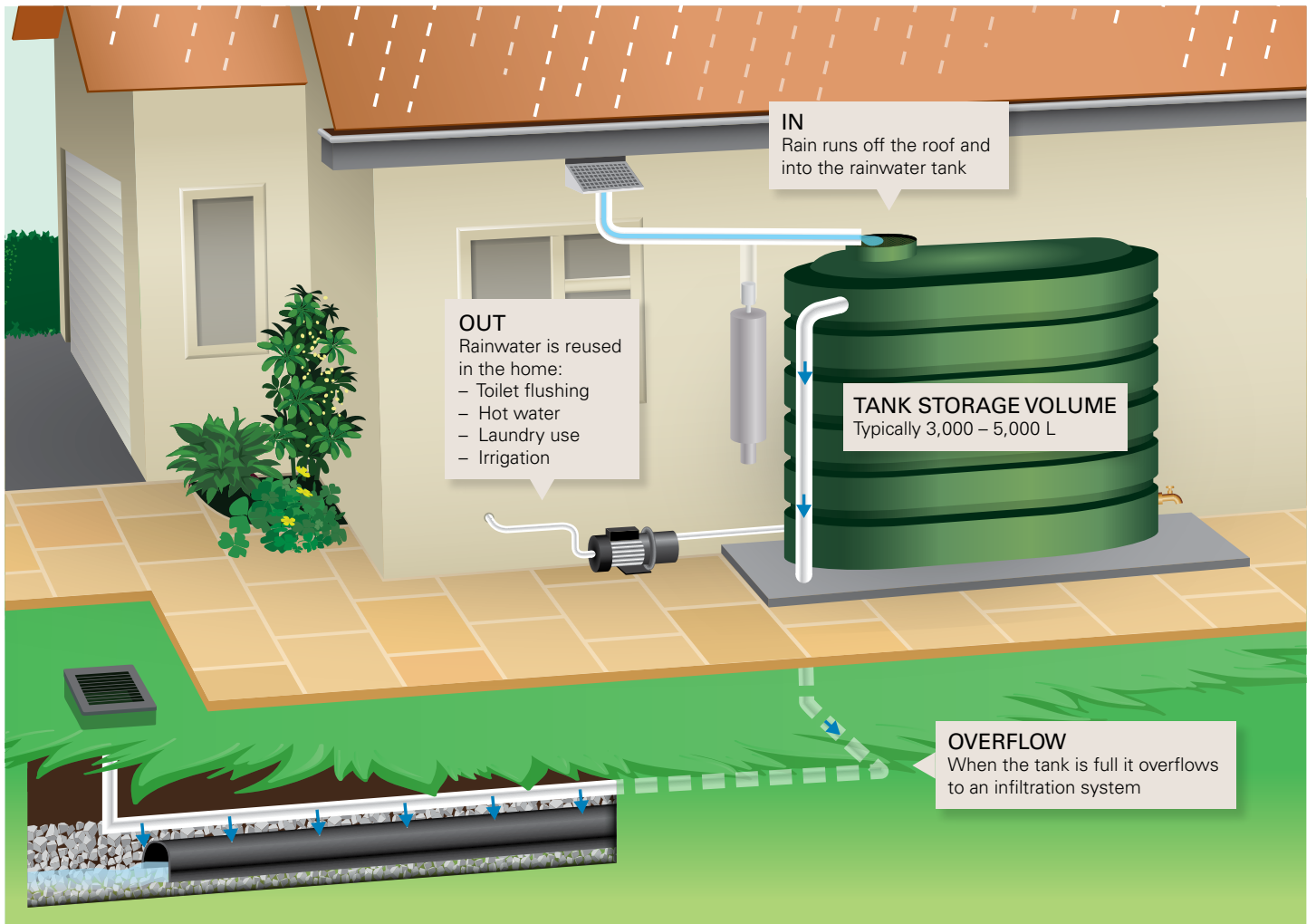


**Stormwater washes pollution from roofs, paving and roads into our creeks and rivers. You can improve the health of our waterways by reducing the volume of stormwater that leaves your property.**

**To do this:**

- use collected rainwater to flush toilets, wash clothes, water your garden and even supply your hot water system
- allow run-off from hard surfaces to run onto grassed areas and soak into soil-based infiltration systems including raingardens
- replace hard surfaces with porous paving and green roofs to reduce run-off
- in design, reduce roof and hard paving cover and include areas of deep soil landscapes.

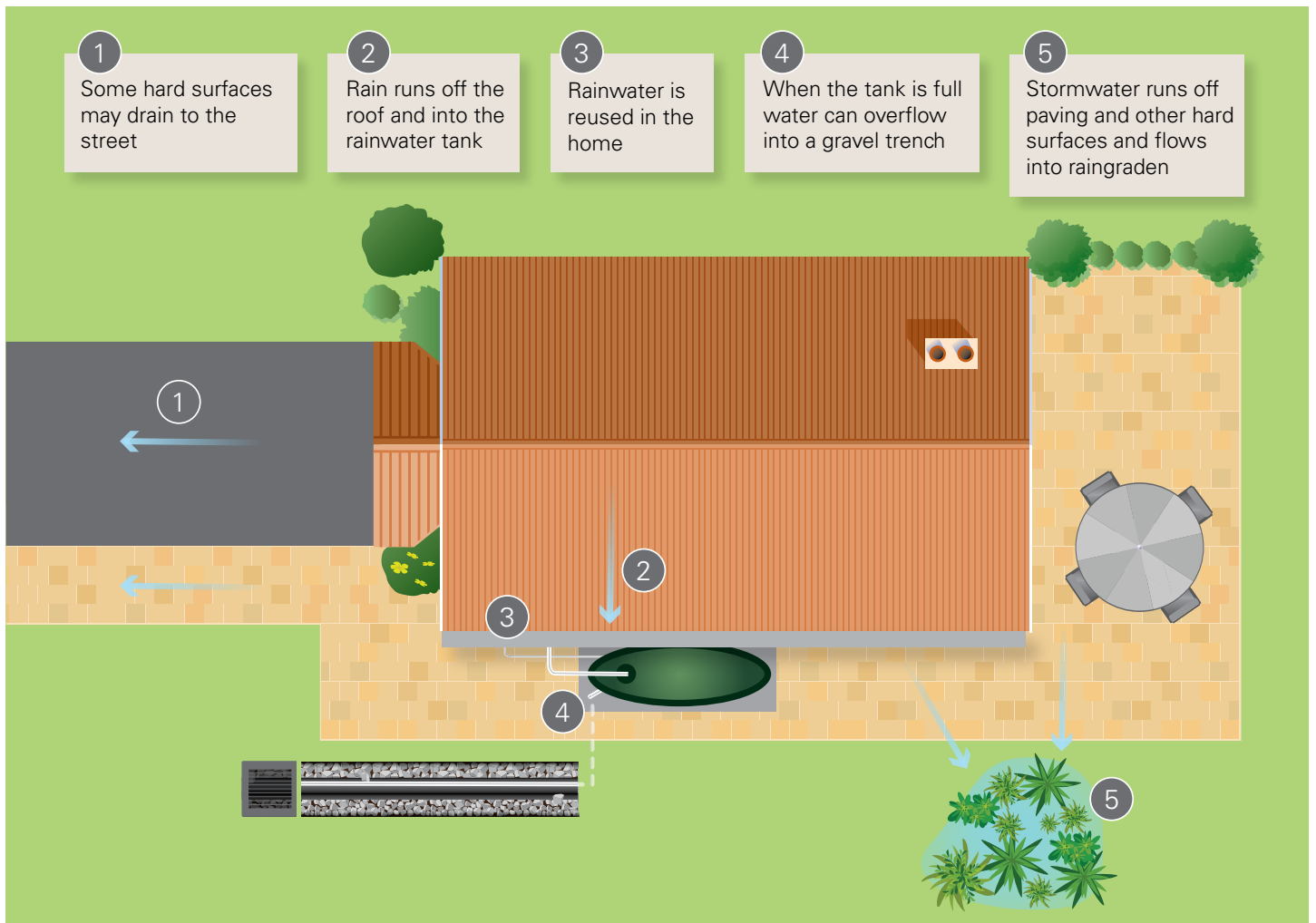
**A low impact home –the rainwater tank intercepts run-off from roof areas, run-off from paving spreads onto lawn areas, hard surface run-off is directed to a raingarden, and overflow from the rainwater tank is directed into a shallow gravel trench.**



# Rainwater tanks

The effectiveness of a rainwater tank to reduce run-off depends on the tank size, the amount coming into the tank, how quickly you use it so the tank can refill and how well the overflow from the tank is designed.

- A larger tank means you can capture more run-off. Typically, a 3,000 to 5,000 L tank will be enough, depending on what comes into and out of your tank. The most effective size may be larger than the minimum required under the Building and Sustainability Index (BASIX).
- The greater the roof area directed to your tank the better – ideally, capture it all.
- Use the tank water daily for toilet flushing, laundry and your hot water supply. It is critical to use the tank water first so you can collect more in the next storm.
- The overflow from your tank is also important. Every tank will spill in a really large storm. Where the water goes will make a big difference to how much stormwater leaves your property. The system will be most effective if you can allow the overflow to drain to an infiltration system in your garden.



## Using run-off

**Stormwater from various parts of your home may run-off to different locations. You will need to understand how the drainage has been designed at your home.**

**Plan view – you can measure these areas with online measuring tools like [maps.six.nsw.gov.au](https://maps.six.nsw.gov.au).**

All your roof area rather than one down pipe collecting from only a small part of your roof may drain to your rainwater tank.

- Some areas may drain to the street – like a driveway sloping down towards the road.

- Paving areas may drain towards a surface raingarden or allow run-off to grass buffer areas.
- Overflow from the rainwater tank may be directed into a shallow gravel trench rather than connect to street drainage.

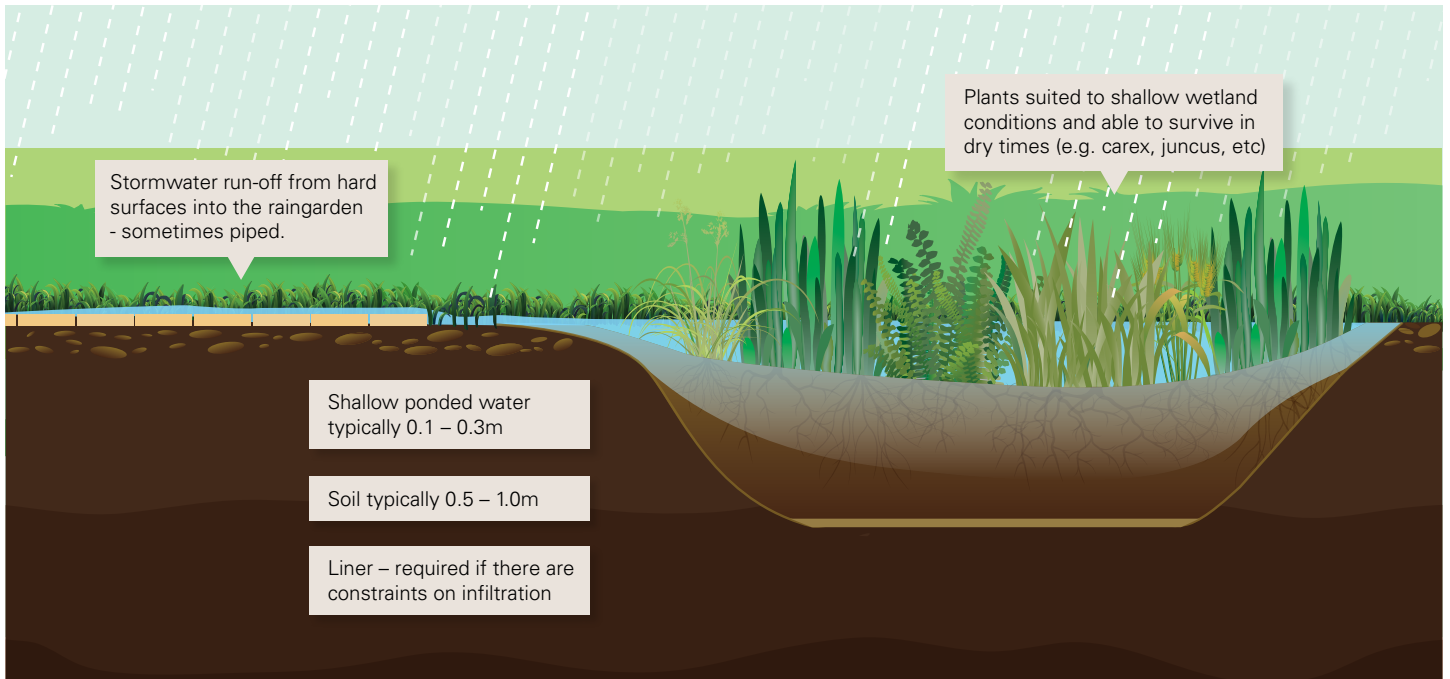
# Infiltration systems

An infiltration system is a specially designed area of lawn or garden that allows stormwater run-off from hard surfaces to soak into the ground.

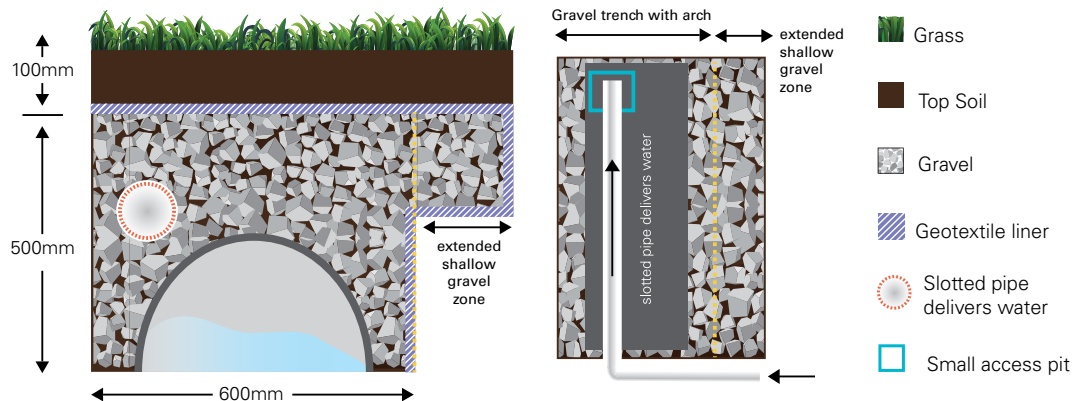
There are many types of systems from simple grass areas that allow water from nearby hard surfaces to soak into the soil to raingardens designed to hold extra run-off on the surface and gravel systems that hold extra run-off underground.

Some locations are not suitable for infiltration. If this is the case a liner can be used to prevent it. The system will still result in water use by plants and evaporation to reduce the impact of run-off.

Raingardens have shallow ponded water on the surface after rain which slowly soaks into the soil. Plants and soil need to be chosen carefully. See our website for further information.



Gravel trenches or 'soak away' systems collect water underground. They often have gravel or an empty space formed by a plastic arch or crates wrapped in a geotextile liner.



## You can help manage stormwater

Using stormwater reduces the amount of water we need from our dams and other water sources.

It keeps our suburbs cool in summer, improves urban ecology and makes our homes beautiful.

## Stormwater charges discount

If you stop about 60 per cent of run-off leaving your property, you may be eligible for a stormwater charges discount of about \$13 per quarter.

Apply for the discount on our website at [sydneywater.com.au](http://sydneywater.com.au) by visiting [sydneywater.com.au/ourprices](http://sydneywater.com.au/ourprices).

If you live in a strata unit, you don't need to apply as you will already pay the discounted price.