

MODULE 2: STARTING YOUR RAINWISE BUSINESS

Contractor Skill-Building Series – Launch Your RainWise Business

RainWise
Seattle Public Utilities
King County Wastewater Treatment Division



WELCOME



This series is designed for people who want to start their own **RainWise** business but need help getting started.



RainWise seeks to increase the numbers of installations in Seattle within combined sewer basins.



Content is adapted from the **RainWise** Academy, a 12-week course hosted by RainWise program staff and South Seattle College in 2020.



Additional resources available at 700milliongallons.org/rainwise/contractor-resources.



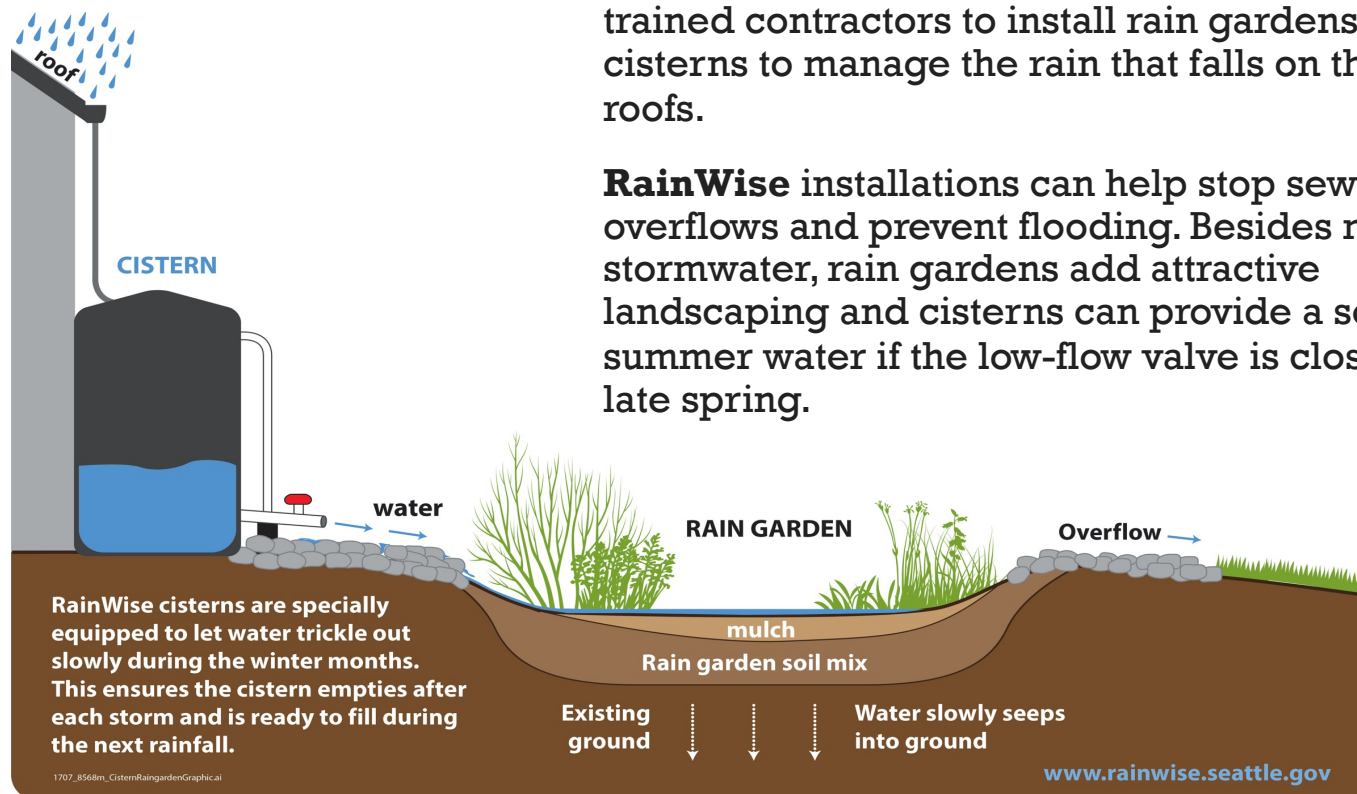
Contact **RainWise** with your questions at rainwise@seattle.gov



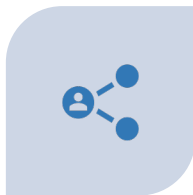
WELCOME

RainWise rebates provide funding for private property owners to hire **RainWise**-trained contractors to install rain gardens and/or cisterns to manage the rain that falls on their roofs.

RainWise installations can help stop sewer overflows and prevent flooding. Besides managing stormwater, rain gardens add attractive landscaping and cisterns can provide a source of summer water if the low-flow valve is closed in the late spring.



RAINWISE CONTRACTOR BENEFITS



Meet potential customers at our in-person & online events



Business listing on the **RainWise** Find-a-Contractor page



Additional skill-building, networking & information-sharing opportunities



Promotion on **RainWise** social media outlets

- **Complete RainWise Contractor Orientation**
- **Be a licensed and bonded contractor in the State of Washington.**
- **Submit your Seattle business license and WA Contractor's License to rainwise@seattle.gov**
700milliongallons.org/rainwise/find-a-contractor



DISCLAIMER

RainWise Contractors are independent businesses.



Do your research and consult financial experts.



Research and understand how you will pay yourself, your reporting responsibilities, and tax liabilities.



Take time to evaluate pros and cons of becoming self-employed.



Evaluate now and decide on changes needed to reach your goals.



STARTING YOUR RAINWISE BUSINESS

This module will give you lots of resources to incorporate RainWise successfully into your business.

Let's get started and take a deep dive into the steps involved.



STARTING YOUR RAINWISE BUSINESS

Steps to becoming a RainWise Contractor:



- Register and license your business with local, state and Federal entities
- Set up financial systems
- Set up operational systems
- Create marketing plan
- Submit paperwork to the **RainWise** program



STARTING YOUR RAINWISE BUSINESS

Paperwork needed to become a RainWise Contractor:

- City of Seattle Business License (renewed every year)
- WA State Contractors License, Liability Insurance, and Surety Bonding
- Complete IRS W-9 form
- Complete RainWise Questionnaire
- Complete program requirements, such as the Covid-19 Safety Plan, if applicable

More information and the paperwork packets here:

700milliongallons.org/rainwise/contractor-resources



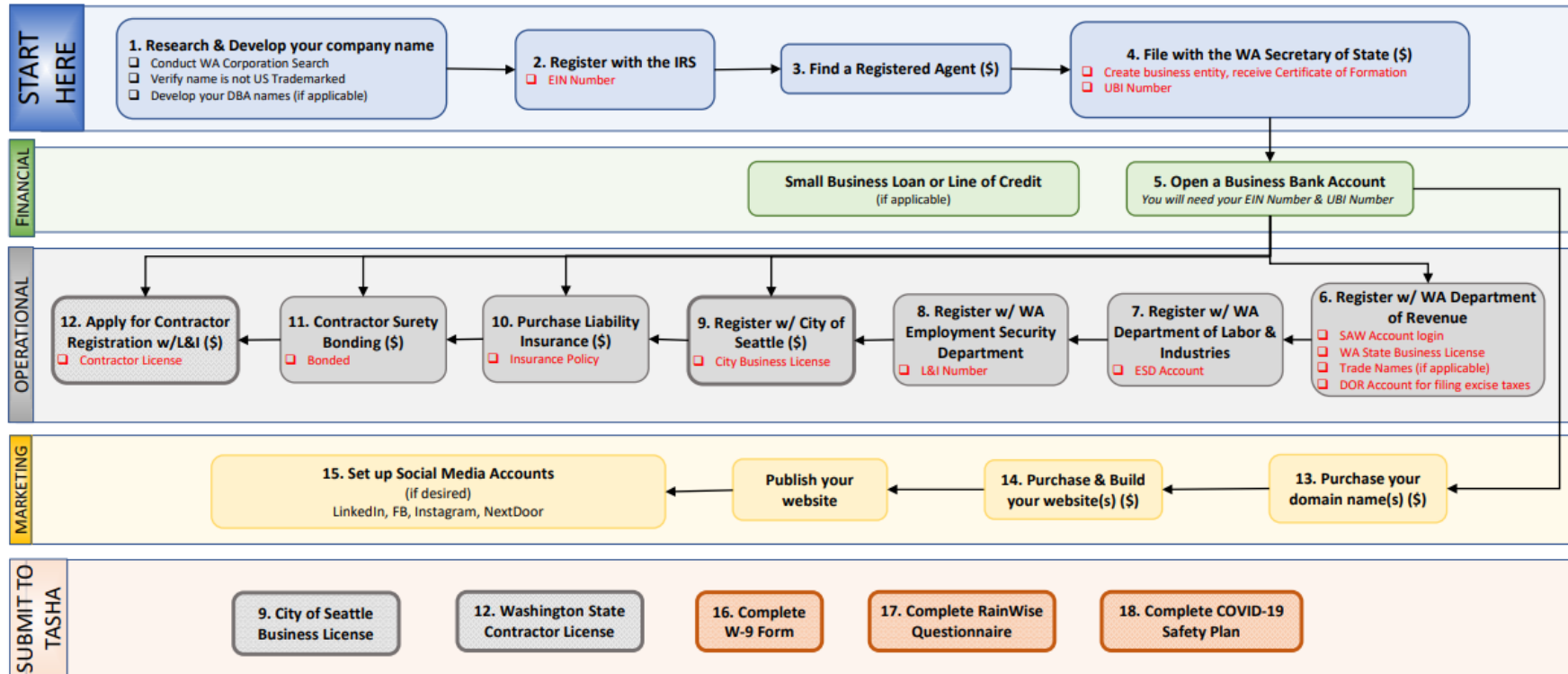


How to Start Your RainWise Business

This document has been compiled as a step-by-step guide to help you form your successful RainWise business. Follow the steps from Left to Right in the flowchart below. (\$) signs indicate areas where money will be required.

Links on the back of this flowchart will direct you to the webpages where you can complete each step.

To become a RainWise Contractor, all documents in the last column will need to be submitted to Tasha Basset at tasha.bassett@seattle.gov.



<https://www.700milliongallons.org/rainwise/contractor-resources/>

[700milliongallons.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/How-to-Start-your-Rainwise-Biz_final.pdf](https://www.700milliongallons.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/How-to-Start-your-Rainwise-Biz_final.pdf)

STARTING YOUR RAINWISE BUSINESS



Step 1: Research & Develop Your Company Name

- Verify that another company in WA State doesn't have your proposed business name by conducting a Washington corporation search through the WA Secretary of State office at <https://ccfs.sos.wa.gov/#/> and https://secure.dor.wa.gov/gteunauth/_/
- Verify your proposed name(s) are not federally trademarked through the US Patent and Trademark Office at 1-800-786-9199 or visit <https://www.uspto.gov/learning-and-resources/support-centers/patent-and-trademark-resource-centers-ptrc/ptrc-basic>
- Determine what, if any, "trade" or "doing business as" names you would like for your business.

Choose a business structure (Sole Proprietor, LLC, or Corporation)

Great resource: business.wa.gov

This link provides fantastic information for small business guidance and planning

business.wa.gov/site/alias_business/877/Small-Business-Guide--Plan.aspx#BusinessPlanning

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Step 2: Register with the IRS Apply to receive your **employer identification number (EIN)** with the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS) here: <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Small Business and Self-Employed Tax Center:

This webpage has forms, publications and other resources for small businesses, including where to get your business its EIN number: irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed

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Step 3: Find a Registered Agent Identify a person or entity appointed to accept service of process and official mail on your behalf of your business.

- If you are forming a Corporation, LLC or a Limited Partnership you must have a Registered Agent with a physical WA address.
- ***You can be your own Registered Agent if you have a physical address in Washington***
- You can also find a registered agent service to be your Registered Agent
- More info can be found here: sos.wa.gov/corps/faq---registered-agents.aspx

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Step 4: File with the WA Secretary of State (\$) A WA limited liability company (LLC) is created by filing a “**Certificate of Formation**” when a **Unified Business Identifier (UBI)** Number is assigned here:
<https://www.sos.wa.gov/corps/limitedliabilitycompaniesllconlineandpaperregistrations.aspx>

Set up your business with the Secretary of State:

sos.wa.gov/corps/all-services.aspx

This page provides the steps to form a business in WA:

dor.wa.gov/open-business

There is also a handy Business Licensing Wizard:

secure.dor.wa.gov/gteunauth

STARTING YOUR RAINWISE BUSINESS



Small Business Loan or Line of Credit
(if applicable)

5. Open a Business Bank Account
You will need your EIN Number & UBI Number

Pro Tip

When it comes time to pay taxes (State and Federal), having all your businesses income and expenses in one account will make your life so much easier!



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Step 6: Register w/ WA Department of Revenue Sign up for a **Secure Access Washington (SAW)** account to access WA business services online. Follow this link to complete the following <https://secure.dor.wa.gov/home/>

- Apply for your **WA State Business License** <https://dor.wa.gov/open-business/apply-business-license>
- Apply for any **Trade Names** (if applicable)
- File your WA State **Business Excise Tax Returns**

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Step 7: Register w/ WA Employment Security Department Use your SAW account from Step 6 to login.
<https://secure.esd.wa.gov/home/>

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Step 8: Register w/ WA Department of Labor & Industries Sign up for a L&I account and receive your **L&I account number**

- If you are hiring employees, obtain Workers' Compensation Insurance
<https://www.lni.wa.gov/insurance/insurance-requirements/how-to-get-a-workers-compensation-account/>
- Register as a Construction Contractor <https://lni.wa.gov/forms-publications/F625-001-000.pdf>

Pro Tip You must sign up for an L&I account whether you will have employees or not

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Step 9: Register w/ City of Seattle (\$) Sign up for a File Local account to obtain your **City of Seattle Business License** and to pay local business taxes here <https://www.filelocal-wa.gov/Default/FileLocal.aspx>

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Step 10: Purchase Liability Insurance (\$) from a private small business vendor such as Hiscox, etc. You'll need to obtain a Certificate of **Professional Liability Insurance** to conduct work in the City of Seattle.

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Step 11: Purchase Contractor Surety Bonding (\$) from a private small business vendor. You'll need to obtain a **Surety Bond** to conduct work in the City of Seattle.

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Step 12: Register as a Construction Contractor w/ WA LNI to obtain your Contractor's License
<https://lni.wa.gov/forms-publications/F625-001-000.pdf>

To be a RainWise contractor you need to be a licensed General Contractor or Specialized Contractor in the State of WA
lni.wa.gov/licensing-permits/contractors/register-as-a-contractor

STARTING YOUR RAINWISE BUSINESS



Pro Tip: Watch this Contractor Overview webinar:
apps-public.lni.wa.gov/training/contractor-overview



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Step 13: Purchase your domain name(s) (\$) from vendors such as Hover. (Tip: Domain vendors such as GoDaddy require an extra fee to ensure your privacy)

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Step 14: Purchase and Build your website(s) (\$) through an online vendor such as SquareSpace, WordPress, etc.

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Step 15: Set up Social Media Accounts (if desired) Advertise your new business on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor, etc.

Dynamic Waters

Black Woman owned landscape contracting: specializing in rain gardens, cisterns, wildflower meadows and hillside erosion control. Dynamic Waters is a landscape design/build company serving the greater Seattle metro area. We specialize in water-wise landscaping alternatives that are anchored in native plants: providing year-round color, as well as sustenance for local pollinators and wildlife. We pride ourselves on creative use of recycled materials and vibrant, multi-layered planting designs that incorporate adaptive stormwater management.

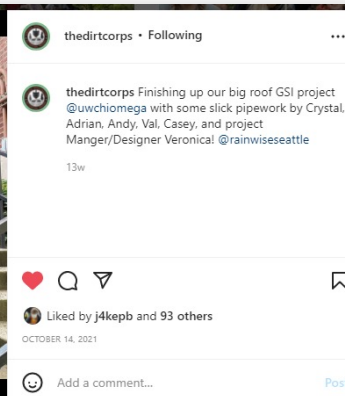
Service Offerings

- Cisterns
- Compost and Mulch
- Rain Gardens

PHONE
360-545-3110

EMAIL
dynamicwaterspnw@gmail.com

WEBSITE
<http://www.dynamicwaters.us>



STARTING YOUR RAINWISE BUSINESS



Step 16: Complete a W-9 Form from the IRS <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>



Step 17: Complete the RainWise Questionnaire. You can find this questionnaire in your packet from RainWise.



Step 18: Complete a RainWise COVID-19 Safety Plan Consult L&I and local health agencies for the latest recommendations regarding COVID-19.



The last and final step in becoming a RainWise Contractor is to submit the below paperwork to Tasha Bassett at tasha.bassett@seattle.gov

- City of Seattle Business License
- Contractor's License
- W-9 Form
- RainWise Questionnaire
- COVID-19 Safety Plan

STARTING YOUR RAINWISE BUSINESS

We hope you found this Starting Your RainWise Business module helpful in terms of outlining the steps to take and providing links and resources.

Future modules will cover working with government agencies, hiring people, and estimating and invoicing.



HOMework & RESOURCES

To access your homework and resources, go to:

700milliongallons.org/rainwise/contractor-resources/contractor-skill-building

- This is the RainWise Skill-Building landing page, which is a subpage on the RainWise **Contractor Resources** webpage.
- Homework is to review the RainWise business flow chart and follow the steps, review the WA Small Business Guide, and get your EIN from the IRS.
- Additional questions? Email rainwise@seattle.gov and put “New Contractor Question” in the subject line.



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Questions?