



Biofiltration swale - a flat bottomed channel where pollutants are removed

### AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION...

Residents can help keep private facilities in good working order by reducing or eliminating polluted stormwater running from their property. Here are some tips:

- **Cover bare soil** from yard work or construction to prevent soil from being carried down the street and into the facility.
- **Sweep rather than pressure wash** or hose driveways and sidewalks.
- **Reduce or eliminate your use of yard chemicals** and fertilizers. Spot-treating weeds is better than a blanket application.
- **Take your car to a commercial car wash** where water is recycled, or wash it where dirty water will not enter the street and storm drain.
- **Pick up pet waste**, bag it and put it in the garbage, even if it's on your own yard.
- **Never dump anything down a storm drain** or into a stormwater facility.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit [www.stormwaterpartners.com](http://www.stormwaterpartners.com) and find comprehensive information on managing stormwater facilities, including:

- How to recognize facilities
- How facilities work
- Who is responsible for maintenance
- *Managing stormwater - an introduction to maintaining stormwater facilities for private property owners and HOAs* (a downloadable publication containing website highlights)
- Maintenance checklists, including recognizing and fixing problems
- Local agency contact information
- Agency stormwater manuals
- News and workshops
- Videos
- Links to other resources



SW WASHINGTON

Clark County, and the cities of Battle Ground, Camas, La Center, Ridgefield, Vancouver and Washougal

[www.stormwaterpartners.com](http://www.stormwaterpartners.com)



This stormwater management outreach program funded by a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology.

New to the neighborhood?  
Find out about...

# managing stormwater

Information for home buyers





Detention pond - stormwater is temporarily stored and slowly released



Facilities that look like natural areas can be attractive, desirable amenities for residents.



Wetpond - permanent pond where sediment and pollutants settle

**W**hen it rains, stormwater flows over roofs, streets, yards and parking lots and becomes contaminated by dirt, oils, fertilizers and chemicals. Left untreated, these contaminants are carried into streams, where they can pose a health risk to humans and wildlife. Stormwater facilities collect and clean runoff, filter out pollutants and slowly disperse water into the soil. Managing stormwater is vital to protect the health of waterways and reduce stream bank erosion and the risk of flooding.

Buying a house means taking on specific responsibilities. Once in your new home, you'll have routine repairs and maintenance. For some, that means maintaining stormwater facilities.

In Clark County, more than 1,000 privately owned and maintained facilities treat stormwater. If a stormwater facility receives runoff from your neighborhood streets, you and your neighbors could be responsible for its maintenance.

## ABOUT STORMWATER FACILITIES

In many areas, stormwater from roads, roofs and other surfaces is collected in a system of ditches, inlets, underground pipes and manholes, and channeled to a treatment facility. Stormwater facilities are part of many subdivisions built after the 1980s as well as commercial properties with parking lots or hard surfaces.

Sometimes recognizing a stormwater facility is difficult because the appearance can vary. Facilities can be as simple as a grassy biofiltration swale running through backyards or as complex as a system of ponds and underground structures. Some facilities are simply grassy areas where water seeps into the ground. Others are natural-looking constructed wetlands that attract birds and wildlife. The structures can occupy all or part of a lot. Many are fenced.

## MAINTENANCE: WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

By law, all stormwater facilities must be maintained so they can function properly. Public facilities are maintained by your local jurisdiction and often consist of roadside

ditches, storm drains and inlets and underground pipes in the road right-of-way.

Private facilities can be small or large. The property owner or homeowner's association (HOA) might be responsible for inspection and maintenance of a neighborhood stormwater facility. Maintenance responsibility will vary according to jurisdiction and whether the facility is publicly or privately owned.

The easiest way to determine whether a facility is public or private is to contact your local jurisdiction. You also can check the notes section on the recorded plat for your subdivision.

## TREAT YOUR STORMWATER FACILITY WELL

Regular maintenance of a stormwater facility extends its life, keeps it functioning well and helps prevent or forestall potentially costly repairs.

Local government does not maintain private facilities but will provide technical assistance in developing a regular maintenance plan and give information and guidance to get the job done.