

Where does stormwater go?

What is stormwater?

Stormwater consists of rainwater, melting snow or ice and other natural precipitation. Stormwater runoff is a major contributor to erosion, flooding and pollution in urban areas, watercourses and lakes.

What is a stormwater management facility (SWMF)?

A stormwater management facility (SWMF) primarily consists of a human-made pond designed to collect and filter stormwater. Sediment and pollutants in the water settle out so that a better quality of water may slowly enter the natural environment. It also acts as "storage" for excess water during heavy precipitation, reducing the risk of flooding.



Stormwater enters the SWMF by direct precipitation, runoff and storm sewers.

Chemicals and sediment can also end up in the SWMF via storm sewers and runoff. This can make the SWMF less effective and impact the environment.

See "How can I help?" below for ways to minimize this.

What is in an SWMF?

- Stormwater, including runoff from pavement, driveways, buildings and roads.
- Salt from winter road maintenance.
- Sediment from roadways, construction and erosion.

Things often found in an SWMF that DON'T belong:

- ✗ Chemicals such as fertilizer, pesticide, oil, grease and gasoline.
- ✗ Trash and animal waste.
- ✗ Wildlife such as geese, goldfish and aquarium plants.

Where does the water go?

Stormwater flows from SWMF into the natural environment, entering streams, rivers and lakes.

Pond safety



Humans and pets should never swim in an SWMF or get close to the water's edge. Bacteria can build up in the pond that could be hazardous to your health.

Stay off the ice in the winter - this is not a safe place to skate or play.

Why is the grass around SWMFs so long?

The area around an SWMF is kept natural to provide optimal treatment of stormwater and to discourage nuisance animals.

How can I help?

You can help prevent flooding by limiting the use of materials on your property that prevent water from passing through, such as concrete. You can also use a rain barrel or rain garden to collect stormwater.

You can help keep pollutants out of storm drains to ensure they don't end up in SWMF or other bodies of water by:

- Properly dispose of chemicals (such as motor oil).
- Wash vehicles at a car wash instead of in the driveway (wastewater from car wash establishments drains into sanitary sewers to be treated, not into storm sewers).
- Do not over fertilize, apply fertilizer right before it rains or fertilize near SWMF's.
- Decrease the amount of salt used for winter maintenance.
- If undertaking construction, take proper precautions to prevent soil and other materials from eroding or washing away.
- Always pick up your trash.
- Do not put plants or animals into the pond, including aquarium fish. These harm the pond's functionality and attract nuisance animals.
- Always pick up pet waste and dispose of it in the garbage.



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