

HOMEOWNERS GUIDE ON CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF STORMWATER PONDS

Are you a homeowner of a subplot with a stormwater pond on it? Do you need help maintaining this structure or have questions on how to do this? This fact sheet outlines the basics for stormwater management on your property.

What is a Stormwater Pond?

Stormwater ponds are designed to help hold stormwater runoff while filtering out sediments and contaminants in the water before discharging it into a natural water body or stream. They also aid in the prevention of flooding and help protect adjacent water, streams, lakes, or rivers from contamination.

Due to more urbanization and an increasing population, more impervious surfaces are created, such as rooftops, parking lots, and sidewalks. These surfaces only allow stormwater to runoff, not infiltrate; creating a need for stormwater management.

Stormwater ponds can be classified into retention and detention ponds. These classifications describe the type of storage the pond provides.

A detention pond or dry pond is a permanent storm water management facility for the temporary storage of runoff and is designed to hold water for a short period of time, typically 2-6 days, but no less than 48 hours and then go dry.

A retention pond or wet pond is designed as a stormwater facility that provides for permanent storage of runoff which is only released through percolation, evaporation, transpiration or through an emergency overflow. These ponds are set up this way to allow pollutants and sediments to settle out of the water before discharging it into another natural water body. Either type of stormwater pond may be utilized for stormwater control on any development site.

No matter which pond may be on your lot, they both will require maintenance. Maintenance is the key for pond longevity and functionality.



The mission of Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District is "To conserve, protect, and enhance the natural resources of Geauga county by providing leadership, education, and assistance to all."

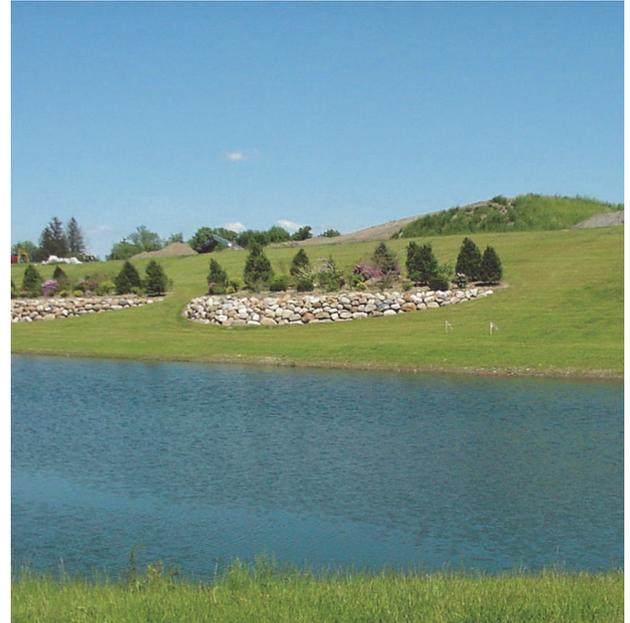
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Maintenance and Responsibility

Proper pond maintenance is very critical and aids in the prevention of many problems that may arise from having a poorly maintained stormwater pond. Wildlife habitat destruction, flooding and erosion, are issues that may occur due to a lack of maintenance. Damage cannot be reversed in these cases, especially if adjoining bodies of water are affected.

Some maintenance items such as sediment removal or checking on the stability of the outlet pipe emphasize the need for regular scheduled pond maintenance. Sediment builds up in a pond over time and needs to be removed to ensure the pond has enough storage capacity for stormwater and to inhibit the amount of resuspension of sediment. The outlet structure in a pond is installed to meet certain discharge criteria. Erosion around the outlet or breakdown of the pipe structure needs immediate addressing to allow the pond to release water at the designated rate.

Maintenance and Responsibility contd.

Stormwater ponds, whether they are located on a commercial or residential lot may be the responsibility of a business, individual homeowner, or homeowner association. Pond ownership and maintenance responsibility is typically outlined in the Deed Restrictions for subdivisions or within a Declaration of Restrictive Covenants if not within a subdivision. Either document should identify the owners, how it will be funded and who will ultimately perform inspections and maintenance. If the responsibility is unknown, check with the Geauga SWCD. Sometimes, the stormwater ponds are contained within a Drainage Maintenance District and the major maintenance will be the responsibility of the County Engineer.



As a landowner, your responsibility to help maintain these stormwater ponds helps not only you, the landowner; but the whole community around you. A regular maintenance program can be implemented and used to ensure the pond(s) continue to function properly. If located within a subdivision, it would be advisable to schedule a meeting with neighbors and discuss the importance of maintenance of the stormwater pond.

When conducting pond maintenance, there are some activities that should not be done without obtaining permission from Geauga SWCD. For example, the shape or depth of the pond is specified within the Deed Restrictions or Declaration of Restrictive Covenants and cannot be altered without prior written consent of the Geauga SWCD. It is also recommended to not plant trees on the dam of the pond. As trees grow, their root systems can cause the dam to become unstable weakening it and resulting in costly repairs.

A maintenance checklist is recommended to be used to document condition of and maintenance performed on the pond. This checklist should be accompanied by a dedicated schedule for pond maintenance. Below are some basic suggestions to be considered in the stormwater pond maintenance checklist:

Stormwater Pond Monthly Maintenance		Yes/No or N/A	Comments
<i>Date of Inspection</i>	<i>Inspected By</i>		
Removal of floating debris			
Removal of woody vegetative growth from pond area including embankments			
Removal of trash and/or sediment accumulation			
Removal of obstructions in orifices and/or outlets			
Mowing of pond, banks, and dam			
Stormwater Pond Annual Maintenance		Yes/No or N/A	Comments
<i>Date of Inspection</i>	<i>Inspected By</i>		
Repair erosion to the outfall or spillway			
Repair and/or replace any damaged structures (i.e. catch basins, risers, pipes, headwalls)			
Repair animal burrows and/or other leaks in the dam			
Debris should be removed from overflow spillway and grates			

Information for this brochure was provided by SEMSWA (Southeast Metro Stormwater Authority), Thurston County Storm and Surface Water Program in Washington; and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

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