Storm Water Pollution Prevention
Clean Water: Our Only Choice

The City of Bartlett has two drainage systems—the sanitary sewers and the storm drains. The storm drain system was designed to prevent flooding by carrying excess rainwater away from streets, homes and businesses. However, as development occurs, the amount of impervious surface such as parking lots, roof tops and roads increases. Impervious surfaces prevent storm water from filtering into the ground. Instead they increase the amount of water leaving an area. This often leads to increased flooding downstream.

Another problem caused by impervious surfaces is that any pollutant that is placed on these surfaces stays there until it is “washed” into our streams and eventually the Mississippi River during the next rainstorm. The pollutants include: oil, other auto-mobile fluids, paint and construction debris, yard and pet wastes, pesticides and litter. The mixing of rain water and these pollutants causes storm water pollution.

To help reduce storm water pollution, the City of Bartlett requires that there is no significant increase in the amount and velocity of storm water leaving the development after the development work is complete as there was before the development.

The most common approach to meeting these requirements is the installation of a detention basin.

Detention basins can be designed and constructed to be aesthetically pleasing. They can also be vegetated and irregularly shaped with landscaping around the edges.

This pamphlet provides general information for how you can properly maintain your detention basin. These Best Management Practices (BMPs) will help reduce downstream flooding and will ensure cleaner streams and rivers.
Detention Basin Maintenance

1. Pollution Prevention Plans

Often the easiest way to maintain a detention basin is to develop and implement a pollution prevention plan at your establishment or neighborhood. A pollution prevention plan drastically reduces the amount of pollution entering your detention basin; thus reducing the amount of time and money necessary to maintain the basin.

Important aspects of a pollution prevention plan:
- Dry sweep parking lots and driveways on a regular basis. This prevents solids from entering the basin and can reduce the need for future basin maintenance.
- Keep cat litter, sawdust or corneal handy to absorb small spills. Properly dispose of the collected material.
- Materials that could pollute storm water should be stored inside a protected, roofed building.
- Educate employees or association members to be aware of potential storm water pollution and how to report potential problems.

2. Maintaining the Basin

- Conduct routine inspections.
- Remove any trash that may have accumulated.
- Make sure that the basin’s banks and bottom are stable. There should be no active erosion in the basin.
- Remove excess sediment, trash or other debris that may be blocking discharge pipes or the emergency spillway.
- Remove and properly dispose of any pollutants such as oil that may have been trapped in the basin.
- Excessive vegetation such as willows or other large trees and shrubs should be removed unless they serve some part of your treatment plan.
- Minimum maintenance requirements include outlet cleaning, mowing, litter control, removal of sediment from basin and outlet structures and repair of structures.
- Keep cat litter, sawdust or corneal handy to absorb small spills. Properly dispose of the collected material.
- Materials that could pollute storm water should be stored inside a protected, roofed building.
- Educate employees or association members to be aware of potential storm water pollution and how to report potential problems.

3. Additional Detention Basin Hints

- Detention basins can be designed and constructed to be aesthetically pleasing. Basins can be vegetated and irregularly shaped with landscaping around the edges.
- All basins can be made to be both functional and attractive. Many colorful and unusual aquatic plants can be used along the edges of a wet or partially wet basins. City ordinance allows a constructed wetland to be used to improve water quality in lieu of a basin.
- Do not use pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers in your basin. These products will leach from the basin and pollute our streams and rivers.
- If you must use fertilizers, only use low-phosphorus, slow release varieties. Keep fertilizers on the lawn and not on paved or other impervious surfaces.
- Make sure your basin is draining properly. Detention basins are designed to release storm water slowly, not hold the water permanently. Improperly maintained basins can harbor breeding areas for mosquitoes and reduce the storage volume of the pond.
- Do not place yard waste such as leaves, grass clippings or brush in basins or in the storm drains located in the streets. These materials release excess nutrients as they decompose.
- Pick up and dispose of pet waste with your weekly garbage.

4. Additional Information

A permanent maintenance agreement for storm water detention/retention facilities may be required, including those components required for water quality control. Maintenance will be the responsibility of the property owner on which the facility is located or a homeowners association and will be recorded as such on the plat with the appropriate notation on the particular lot unless that responsibility has been legally transferred to another person or entity by a properly recorded legal agreement.