

PE-2

Green

Stormwater Solutions

for Acton's Neighborhoods



How Stormwater Gets Polluted

When rain hits the pavement it picks up pollutants like soil, trash, automotive leaks, fertilizer, and pet waste. This contaminated stormwater will flow directly to our rivers without treatment.

This may harm the river's ecosystem and those who depend on it for life and recreation.

The #1 Water Quality Problem

Which do you think is a greater source of water pollution today - factories or municipal storm drains?

While we often associate factories with pollution, the truth is they have been meeting strict treatment requirements since the 1970s. Municipalities are just now required to start addressing stormwater quality issues. The U.S. EPA states that the number one water quality problem in the United States is polluted stormwater runoff carried by municipal storm drains directly to rivers, lakes and streams (www.epa.gov/owow/nps/qa.html).

Some Easy Answers

The good news is that it is easy to help prevent stormwater pollution. Here are some basic habits to adopt:

- ◆ Never dump anything down a storm drain
- ◆ Sweep up trash, grass clippings, soil, etc., from pavement; do not hose them down (where they flow straight to storm drains and the river)
- ◆ Wash your car on the lawn or at a car wash facility
- ◆ Dispose of pet waste in the trash

Green Solutions

There are many green solutions to consider, for example:

- ◆ Grass Swales
Low maintenance
- ◆ Vegetated Swales
Similar to rain gardens
- ◆ Bump Outs
May be used with or without curbs

Each of these is summarized on the back of this flyer, but they all offer the same benefits:

- ◆ Increased green space and safety
- ◆ Slower vehicle speeds
- ◆ Enhanced property values
- ◆ More walkable community
- ◆ Preservation of large healthy street trees, necessary parking and emergency vehicle access
- ◆ Less polluted runoff, improved water quality



Green Solutions are Beautiful and Beneficial

These green stormwater solutions all function in a similar way – stormwater is routed into the green zone where it seeps into the ground, rather than running off into storm drains. Any trash or debris left behind in the green zone would have otherwise been carried to the river, so take heart if you find some leftovers after a storm!

Grass Swale



- ◆ Stormwater collects in grass swales instead of underground storm sewers
- ◆ May be used with or without curbs
- ◆ Low maintenance – mow and pick up trash

Vegetated Swale



- ◆ Vegetated with native flowers and shrubs
- ◆ Similar to rain gardens
- ◆ May be used with or without curbs
- ◆ Requires some weeding and trash collection

Contact Information/Next Steps

If you are interested in green solutions or have questions, please contact your representative:

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Acton Health Department, health@acton-ma.gov

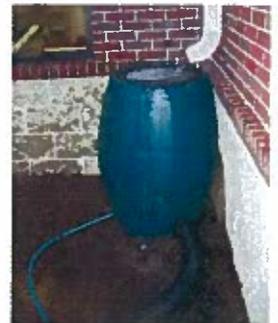
Bump Outs



- ◆ Vegetated with flowers, shrubs, trees, or turf grass
- ◆ May be used with or without curbs
- ◆ Requires weeding or mowing and trash collection
- ◆ Slows traffic, providing increased safety

Want to Do More?

Installing a rain barrel is an easy way to start implementing green stormwater practices on your own property. Once installed, use captured rainwater to irrigate plants and grass. Not only does this help minimize stormwater runoff, it reduces water consumption and saves money.



Adding a rain garden to your landscape is another great option. Rain gardens do not have to be elaborate or costly. Even a simple, deep depression filled with native plants can help. To learn more about installing a rain garden on your property and other green solutions, visit:

www.raingardens.org
www.epa.gov/owow/nps/lid
www.nativeplants.msu.edu
www.mywatersheds.org
www.wildtypeplants.com

