

Important Stormwater Practices

Do's...

- Minimize the use of fertilizers in your yard, as fertilizer run off can lead to fish kills and algal blooms in wet basins and can pollute our groundwater.
- Scoop, bag, and trash pet wastes often, so it doesn't get washed into your basin.
- Install a rain garden or rain barrel.
- Keep grass clippings and other debris out of stormwater drainage systems to prevent clogging.
- Remove trash and yard waste from gutters and around storm drains.
- Report clogged culverts or slow-moving water in ditches to your HOA or local government.
- Direct down spouts to vegetated areas instead of paved areas.

Don'ts...

- Do not fill stormwater ponds, swales or retention systems with dirt or other debris (including leaves, sticks, and other yard debris), as this may result in flooding.
- Don't dump oil, chemicals or yard trash into ponds, inlets or storm drains. Contact the Alachua County Hazardous Waste Collection Center at 352-334-0440 to recycle these materials free of charge.
- Changing the elevation of large pieces of property can have drastic impacts on where stormwater flows. Consult the stipulations of your neighborhood's permit before undertaking any construction.



Open Space Basins

In unincorporated Alachua County, some stormwater systems have been designed and built in a way to achieve open space credit, and are therefore called "open space basins." Open space basins are not always what you think of as "open." They are typically planted with native vegetation and are allowed to grow with little to no routine mowing. There can be both dry and wet open space basins, and these systems have to meet all the requirements of conventional basins, as well as incorporate other design characteristics such as a forbay and native vegetation (trees, shrubs, wildflowers) within the basin bottom.

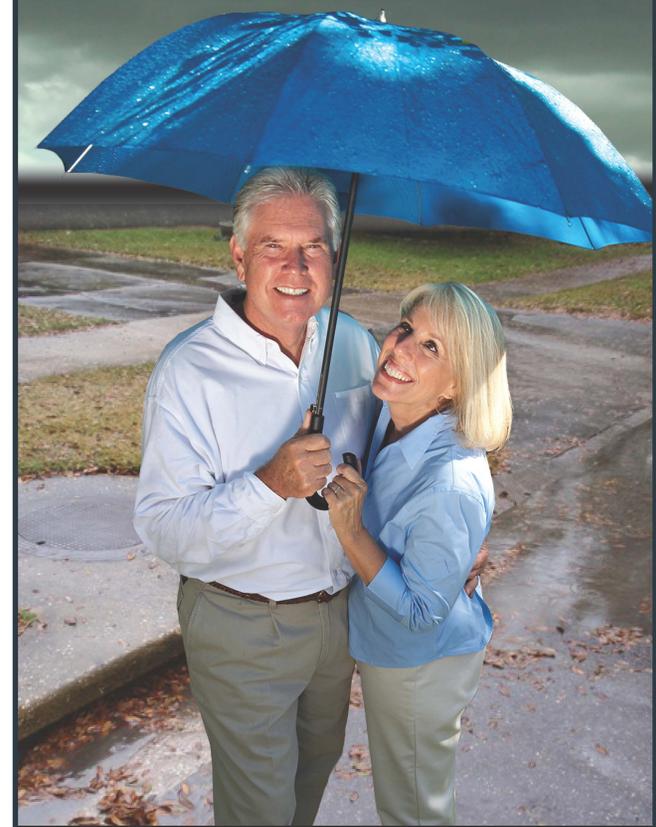


Learn more at
www.AlachuaCountyWater.org

Alachua County Public Works: 352-374-5245
Alachua County Environmental Protection
Department: 352-264-6800
City of Gainesville Public Works: 352-334-5070.

Protecting Our Water

Helpful Tips for Improving and Maintaining Stormwater Systems



Stormwater systems come in a variety of shapes, sizes and forms, but basically there are two major types:

Retention Systems:

Retention basins are designed to allow water to seep through soil into the shallow groundwater aquifer. A basin can be man-made or it can be a natural depression. Vegetation stabilizes basin slopes and filters out sediments. Retention systems are closed systems, constructed so that stormwater remains in the basin and does not reach natural water bodies.



Stormwater runoff is water from rain that “runs off” across the land instead of seeping into the ground. Stormwater can transport pollution from our yards and roads into our natural water bodies and groundwater. A stormwater system is a tool for managing runoff: it provides a place for storing stormwater so our buildings and infrastructure do not flood and helps remove pollutants from runoff.

Some stormwater systems are designed to mimic natural processes so individuals may have stormwater features on or near their property without realizing it. What appears to be a natural indentation in a yard may have been designed as a stormwater swale. What looks like a wild patch of shrubbery may be an important vegetative buffer around a pond.



Stormwater swales are types of retention. Swales are either man-made or natural areas shaped to allow water to be quickly absorbed into the ground or to allow the water to flow to other stormwater systems or waterways.

Detention Systems:

Wet detention systems (ponds) are the most recognized stormwater systems. They are designed to allow litter and sediments to settle out and for water to be absorbed. During large storms, an outflow structure allows water to slowly exit the pond into downstream waterways. Part of the pond—known as the permanent pool—is always below the level of the drain structure and stays wet. Sometimes aquatic vegetation is planted around the edge of the pond to help filter pollutants.



Dry detention systems are normally dry and are designed to collect and temporarily hold stormwater before a gradual release of the stormwater.