

Ponds and Swales May Require Maintenance



Pond outlet blocked with debris



Standing water in a swale may cause algae growth and attract nuisance wildlife and mosquitoes

When to Report Problems With Ponds and Swales

If you see a pond with:

- An inlet or outlet blocked with trash or other debris
- Trash in the pond
- Buildup of sediment or vegetation in the pond
- Holes, protruding roots, or shrubs growing on the embankment
- Pipes with extreme rusting or damaged pipes or concrete
- Erosion or gullies along the banks or side slopes
- Erosion downstream of the pond

If you see a swale with:

- Standing water 48 hours after a storm
- Cattails, reed grass or woody vegetation
- Insect or odor problems

Take action!

Call your Homeowners Association or Local Highway Department to find out who is responsible for maintaining your stormwater management pond or swale.

Major repairs to ponds and swales must be done by a professional.

For More Information:

Onondaga County Health Department
435-6600 • www.ongov.net/Health

Onondaga County Office of the Environment
435-2647 • www.ongov.net/Environment

Syracuse Urban Area Stormwater Phase II Program
www.cnyrpdb.org/stormwater-phase2

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Region 7 Division of Water
426-7500 • www.dec.ny.gov

US Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov/npdes

Cornell University Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County
424-9485 • www.cce.cornell.edu/onondaga

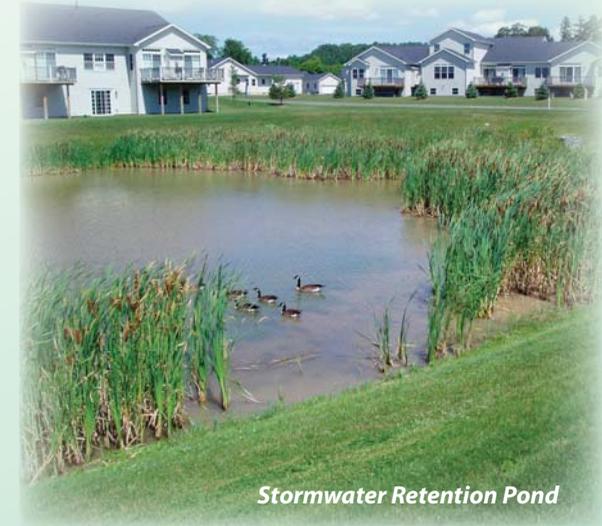
Onondaga Soil and Water Conservation District
677-3851 • www.ocswcd.org

Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency
453-2866 • www.ocrra.org

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Is There a Pond Near Your Home?



Stormwater Retention Pond

Help Keep Our Water Clean



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How Does a Stormwater Pond Work?

First it receives...

Rainwater and melted snow from neighborhood driveways, streets, rooftops and lawns. This water collects pollutants before flowing into the storm sewer and to the pond.

Then it improves water quality...

- Natural processes reduce the pollutants in runoff collected in ponds
- The pond shape, and wetland plants such as cattails, slows the flow of water, and this allows particles containing pollutants to settle
- Plants also filter out some of the nutrients that cause algae and vegetation to grow

To function properly and keep our water clean, your pond needs help



Stormwater runoff washes into the street on its way to the neighborhood pond

How to Keep Your Neighborhood Pond Working Properly

- Only mow grass and other vegetation within 10 feet of the water's edge twice a year, to a height of 4 to 6 inches. Proper mowing controls growth of woody vegetation and prevents erosion
- Remove clippings near the pond after mowing to prevent nutrients from entering the pond when the grass decomposes
- Do not throw clippings into the pond!
- Do not use excess fertilizer on your lawn that can wash into the pond, creating unsightly amounts of algae
- Using too much fertilizer wastes money!
- Consider using zero- or low-phosphorus fertilizer to protect water quality



Algae from too much fertilizer interferes with pond functions and is unsightly

Have your soil tested to see how much fertilizer to use. Call Cornell Cooperative Extension at 424-9485

What about Mosquitoes?

A properly functioning and maintained stormwater pond will minimize mosquito growth.

A pond designed with deeper pools provides habitat for species such as frogs and fish that feed on mosquito larvae.

Breeding sites for mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus are often found on residential properties. Be sure to change water often in shallow wading pools, bird baths, and in other places where water collects, and clean clogged rain gutters.



This is a well-constructed pond because it is deep and has vegetation close to shore



This is a poorly-constructed pond because it is too shallow to function properly

Stormwater Control with Swales

Areas of low ground between properties that look like ditches are called grassed waterways or swales. They safely move excess water to prevent back yard flooding.

Grassed swales must be maintained to function properly.



A grassed swale between properties

What you can do to help keep your backyard swale working properly:

- Mow the swale often to keep water flowing
- Do not allow debris or litter to collect in the swale because it may block drainage and cause flooding
- Re-seed bare spots to prevent soil erosion

You can do your part by maintaining your yard with care.