

# Clean Water

At A Glance

Water  
Quality  
Facilities

## Water Quality Facilities

When it rains, runoff washes over streets, roofs, lawns, and parking lots - picking up sediment, oil, bacteria, grease, pesticides, and other pollutants. To reduce the amount of pollution flowing into waterways, city, state, and federal laws require the installation of water quality facilities. These facilities collect and treat stormwater runoff from roads, commercial and industrial areas, and neighborhoods. The owner of the property where the facility is located is required to maintain it.

Water quality facilities may be constructed swales, wetlands, basins, ponds, or rain gardens. They typically look like a depression in the ground that may have a combination of grass, rock, shrubs, and trees. Water quality facilities remove pollutants from stormwater and help control flooding through natural processes, which involve the filtration and retention of runoff. Soil organisms and plants break down and absorb pollutants. Most water quality facilities are linked directly to local rivers and streams via the City's stormwater system. These facilities need to be regularly cleaned and maintained to prevent flooding and pollution in local waterways.



Rain Garden



Swale



Pond

### Keep Drinking Water Clean!

More than 90 percent of Springfield's drinking water comes from groundwater. If water quality facilities are not maintained, over time they can accumulate pollutants, which can leach into our drinking water supply. Keep your facility well-vegetated and maintain it regularly.

#### Report Water Pollution

Help keep our local rivers healthy and report water pollution. Call the water pollution reporting hotline at 541.726.3694 or email [dpw@springfield-or.gov](mailto:dpw@springfield-or.gov)

For more information on how to protect local rivers, go to [springfieldstreams.org](http://springfieldstreams.org) or email our team at [WaterResources@springfield-or.gov](mailto:WaterResources@springfield-or.gov)



Your water quality facility's maintenance is important to the protection of our waterways. Refer to the Operations and Maintenance Plan for your facility for specific maintenance guidelines. Below are a few tips to help keep your facility in good shape and our water resources healthy.

## Pollution Prevention

Keep pesticides out of your water quality facility. Pesticides can kill aquatic life and seep into groundwater. Instead, remove unwanted plants mechanically or by hand. Regular mowing is an effective way to keep weeds under control, but be careful not to mow small native shrubs and trees.

Keep pets out of water quality facilities and pick up pet waste. Pet waste contains harmful bacteria, nutrients, and parasites.

Remove trash and debris. Garbage can harm wildlife, and release contaminants into the environment as it breaks down.

Keep yard debris and grass clippings out of your facility. The decomposition process decreases the amount of oxygen in water, which can be dangerous for fish and aquatic life.

## Vegetation & Soil Maintenance

Plant native plants in your facility. Native plants require the least amount of water and maintenance. They are also great for wildlife habitat and improving water quality. Place mulch around the base to prevent weeds and hold in moisture.

Water your plants during the first one to two summers until they are established. Replace dead vegetation. Plants should cover at least 90 percent of the facility.

Remove invasive plant species like blackberry, English ivy, and bittersweet nightshade. Invasive species can take over a facility causing flooding and displacing native plants.

Mow or weed-eat the top of the bank. This will help keep weeds under control.

Keep inlets and outlets clear of vegetation and sediment so water can flow in and out of the facility.

Remove built-up sediment by hand, with minimum damage to vegetation. Dispose of it in the trash.

Maintain the amended soil depth of your facility, typically 12-18 inches of soil. The soil media (in combination with plants) removes the pollutants in stormwater runoff. Repair eroded areas by filling with topsoil during the dry season, re-grade and replant large bare areas. Maintaining the soil depth also keeps pollutants from entering groundwater - which is where our drinking water comes from.

Remember to inspect your facility several times a year. Check it during the rainy season to make sure it is functioning properly. City staff is available to provide assistance and direction if you have questions or if management issues arise. Please call us at 541.726.3694 or email us at [WaterResources@springfield-or.gov](mailto:WaterResources@springfield-or.gov)