



# Maintaining Stormwater Management Systems

## Why be concerned?

The importance of maintaining stormwater management systems can't be overemphasized. No matter how well designed, without regular maintenance drainage systems will eventually stop functioning properly, losing their ability both to control flooding and to remove pollutants from stormwater.



## Maintaining Your Detention System

**Retention** ponds are designed to store stormwater runoff without releasing it (except through evaporation, soil infiltration, or emergency bypass).

**Detention** ponds are designed to store stormwater runoff and release it at a controlled rate to systems that ultimately lead to rivers and streams. In order to function properly, retention and detention systems must be rigorously maintained. Your system may have special maintenance requirements; however, in general:

- Maintain thick, native vegetation around ponds to slow and filter stormwater before it enters them. Avoid mown lawn to the water's edge.
- Regularly remove accumulated sediment and debris, especially around outflow control devices.
- Regularly check and clean inlet sedimentation basins to ensure that there's sufficient storage volume for proper function.
- Inspect the entire system at least once a year. If possible, inspections should be carried out by a professional engineer.
- Immediately repair or replace any damaged or defective structural components.

## Herbicide-Free Algae Control

Herbicides and algicides used to control plant growth in ponds can pollute both retention ponds and waters downstream. Algae and aquatic plants can be controlled by limiting the input of nutrients (such as fertilizers, leaves and lawn clippings) and providing aeration.

## Developing and Implementing a Maintenance Plan

A plan will help to expedite proper maintenance. Plans will vary, depending on the business and site; however every plan should contain the following:

1. A delineation of all stormwater management facilities (including maintenance access and vegetated buffer areas).
2. Provision for the routine and non-routine inspection of every component within the system. A professional engineer should be retained to inspect structural facilities and to conduct emergency inspections.
3. A list of the tasks required to maintain each component of the stormwater management system and a schedule for completing these tasks. This should include both preventative and corrective activities.
4. The party responsible for performing each of the maintenance activities described.
5. A description of on-going landscape maintenance needs, including soil erosion control.

For help determining how to maintain your system, call Cobb County Storm Water Management listed under "Getting Help."

## GETTING HELP

Cobb County  
Stormwater Management... (770) 419-6435  
Water Quality Section .... (770) 419-6441

Community Partners for  
Healthy Streams .....(770) 419-6303