

## Why is protecting stormwater important?

Stormwater accounts for an estimated 70-90% of water pollution. If water is polluted, we cannot use it for drinking, bathing, watering crops, cooking, or anything else. Not only does dirty water affect us, but it also harms the ecosystems around us. Plants and animals rely on clean water for drinking and habitats.



**Interested in controlling stormwater on your property but don't know where to start?**

**Contact us today!**



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**What is Stormwater?**

A guide to managing stormwater in your own home and how you can be a stormwater steward.

## What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is any water from rain or snow that does not infiltrate into the ground after a storm, and instead runs along the surface of the ground. This water is pulled downhill by gravity which causes it to run over different terrains until it eventually reaches a body of water like a river, lake, or stream.

Through this journey, stormwater picks up many pollutants along the way like sediment, lawn chemicals, pet waste, and more.



Stormwater runoff picks up sediment and pollutants after storms, often creating a chocolate-milk-like appearance in the water as demonstrated in this picture.

## Plants & Stormwater

Vegetation has a big impact on stormwater and preventing pollution. Native plants have deep root systems that hold soil into place, keeping sediment from being picked up by stormwater runoff. Below is a list of native plants with deep root systems:

- Big Bluestem
- Switchgrass
- Goldenrod
- Indian Grass
- Blazing Star
- Prairie Dock
- New England Aster
- Lead Plant
- Purple Coneflower



## Gardening for Stormwater

Rain gardens are an attractive tool for capturing and filtering stormwater. Sitting 3-6" below ground, these bathtub-like gardens hold water after a storm for 24-48 hours while plants soak up excess water and pollutants.



## Ways to Reduce Your Impact at Home

Reducing stormwater pollution at home is easy and affordable! Check out these ideas on ways you can reduce your impact:

- Install a rain barrel
- Build a rain garden
- Pick up all pet waste in the yard
- Reduce lawn chemical usage such as fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides
- Plant native plants
- Don't cut grass shorter than 3"
- Get your soil tested to know the exact chemicals you need
- Start a compost bin
- Plant a native tree
- Disconnect a downspout
- Properly dispose of all household hazardous waste
- Never wash your car in the driveway - always take it to a car wash
- Reduce water usage while brushing your teeth, bathing, and cleaning

