

Why Care About Stormwater?

Stormwater is water from rain and snowmelt. As rain and snow falls to earth in agricultural and undeveloped areas, it is either absorbed or it slowly runs off and dissipates. In urban areas, where rooftops and paved areas prevent the water from being absorbed, problems arise as the runoff collects pollutants and carries them to nearby streams and lakes. Pollutants include gasoline, oil, heavy metals, pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers and bacteria.



Polluted stormwater runoff is a leading cause of impairment to the nearly 40 percent of surveyed U.S. water bodies which do not meet water quality standards. Left uncontrolled, this water pollution can result in the destruction of fish, wildlife, and aquatic life habitats; a loss in aesthetic value; and threats to public health due to contaminated food, drinking water supplies, and recreational waterways.

REMEMBER!

Water runs downhill.

Water picks up everything.

Water flows to our rivers, streams, creeks and lakes.

Do your part to keep our water clean!

Dumping liquid or solid waste into a storm drain is illegal. If you see illegal dumping, report it!

(509) 574-2300

Or

PublicServicesIllicitDischarge@co.yakima.wa.us.

Would you drink it? Let kids play in it? Put it on your food?



Storm drains flow to rivers and creeks.
Think about where that water goes ...

Eastern Washington Landscapers:

Our Stormwater Needs You!



Yakima Regional Stormwater Working Group

Professional Landscaper Opportunities, Practices, and the Bottom Line

STORMWATER AND LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Low Impact Development (LID) is a recent concept for on-site stormwater retention.

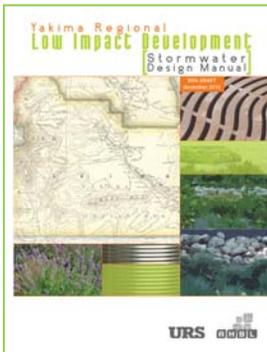


Instead of a pipe system to the nearest creek, stormwater is infiltrated onsite to mimic pre-development conditions.

A primary component of LID is the infiltration swale, which can be as simple as a rock-lined detention pond or a beautiful landscape feature that adds value to the property.

The landscape design and maintenance industry is uniquely poised to lead the way in installation and care of these stormwater features. Knowing how LID features function

and providing proper design, installation and maintenance to ensure optimal performance is key to their success. Design guidance and maintenance recommendations are provided in two manuals: the Eastern



Washington LID Guidance Manual and the Yakima Regional Low Impact Development Guidance Manual. Additional training is offered by the Washington State Department of Ecology and Washington Stormwater Center in Puyallup.

PRACTICES

In addition to LID, become familiar with the practices below to offer better service to your clients.

1) **Manage yard waste.** Yard waste left in the street, sidewalk, or driveway, or dumped, blown, or swept into the storm drain will eventually wash into nearby creeks, streams, rivers, and lakes during a storm or by water runoff from watering. Yard waste in a local waterway depletes the oxygen level in the water, which is harmful to aquatic life. Don't blow clippings into the street!

2) **Consider chemical fate and transport.** Improperly applied fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides, as well as organic amendments used on the lawn also



The street won't grow with more water ..!

wash down the storm drain and negatively impact aquatic life, so by controlling application, you can help reduce storm water pollution.

3) **Water wisely.** Control the amount of water and direction of sprinklers. Sprinklers should only be on long enough to allow water to soak into the ground, but not so long as to cause runoff.

4) **Design for success.** Use features like earth shaping and rain gardens to keep rainwater on your clients' landscape, rather than letting it run off into storm drains, carrying fertilizers, pesticides, soil, and other debris. Bark and mulch, and pollutants that hitch a ride on organic materials, can also be carried into storm drains.

5) **Be part of the solution.** Landscape companies unknowingly contribute to local stormwater problems. Practices such as storing materials or washing rock on the street where the runoff goes to the storm drain, or tracking mud from undeveloped sites to the public street should be avoided. Be part of the green industry and pay attention to how your practices impact the environment.

THE BOTTOM LINE

1) Residents and businesses are becoming more and more aware of the impact that yard care activities have on their landscape, wallet, and local lakes, rivers, streams, and creeks. As their lawn care company, consider talking to clients about leaving their yard waste on the lawn. By mulching grass clippings and fallen tree leaves on their lawn, you are supplying it with natural fertilizers, meaning your clients spend less money on fertilizer application and you also save money, time, and energy.

2) Clogged storm drains also use up tax dollars. A nearby storm drain may become clogged if dirt, grass clippings and/or leaves are swept or blown into the storm drain. Clogged storm drains may cause flooding and requires that the city/county come out and clean the storm drain. Ask your clients if they would prefer to have their tax dollars spent on cleaning out a storm drain or fixing a pothole in the street.

3) Your local jurisdictions have permits they must comply with that allow ONLY stormwater to drain from their stormwater system to waters of the State. All jurisdictions with permits have ordinances prohibiting any non-stormwater materials from entering their stormwater system. Discharge to the storm drain, ACCIDENTAL or NOT, could lead to enforcement actions, which could include fines.

