



• **What is storm water and why do we need to manage it?**



Federal and State laws regulating water quality and the management of stormwater necessitate that the City of Massillon re-evaluate the way it manages the water that runs off impervious surfaces such as concrete, asphalt, or rooftops.



Stormwater runoff carries pollutants directly to the Tuscarawas River and creeks and has the potential to create drainage and flooding problems throughout the city.

Storm Water

focus

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF STORMWATER MANAGEMENT IN THE CITY OF MASSILLON

Storm water drainage issues are one of the most common complaints received by the City from private land owners. In the City of Massillon, the varied topography can aggravate the problem. County and local government agencies are responsible for reviewing development and building plans to assure that proper drainage does exist. However, once the property owner receives the final Certificate of Occupancy, the City's authority ends. If your neighbor installs a pool or landscaping and reroutes the storm water runoff that could damage your property, it becomes a civil matter between neighbors.

As Ohio has undergone the strains of urban and rural development, the courts have continuously modified the way in which they apply the law to issues of storm water drainage.

Reasonable use doctrine has evolved to provide flexibility and practicality to the application of Ohio's drainage laws. The reasonable use doctrine essentially provides that an acceleration or obstruction of surface water flow should be examined to determine whether or not the change is "reasonable" in each case.

The best way to avoid problems is to be aware of where your drainage easements are located.

If you are downstream of anyone, and most of us are, Ohio law says you must accept the water flowing from the higher land through a natural drainage channel. Here are some good rules of thumb:

Do not increase the rate of flow or volume of runoff.

Do not redirect or concentrate the flow of runoff. When adding features to your property, make sure you or your contractor consider the flow of runoff.

If you break it, you buy it! If you block a drainage channel or change the direction of natural flow, you may be responsible and liable for damage caused on another's property.



In Urban Environments, Small Impacts Add Up

Do not enclose a drainage swale into a pipe, before checking with your local Engineering or Public Works Department. It is important to use the right-sized pipe and to make sure that, by concentrating the flow in a pipe, you will not damage neighboring property. It is better to work with your neighbors, and not push your water problem onto them. Open swales are the best environmental solution to storm water when the storm water infiltrates or drains away within 24 hours.

Keep the swale clear of brush and logs. Never put leaves, mulch or grass clippings in or near a catch basin, stream or swale.

If you live near a water source, plant a buffer of natural vegetation and establish a no mow zone. This will serve as an inexpensive filter of pollutants.

An ounce of prevention will pay off when it comes to maintaining drainage channels.

Why Should This Matter To You?

Water quality touches all of us every day: through the water we drink from the tap, shower and swim in, and use to water our plants and crops with. Your local water utility serves a key role – treating wastewater and drinking water – but ensuring access to clean waters and the land surrounding them starts with you, your neighbors and local community organizations.

