

Did you know that your health—and the economic health of your whole community—is directly tied to the quality of the water in your local rivers, lakes, and streams? That’s why it’s important to reduce the pollution that can get into stormwater—the water that flows on hard surfaces after it rains or snows and drains into local waterways.

There are a number of innovative solutions to manage and filter stormwater so that it doesn’t carry dirt, chemicals, and other pollutants to our rivers, lakes, and streams. Supporting community investment in stormwater management will help keep our waterways clean and you and your family healthy.

BEFORE: PARKING LOT



YOU’RE WORTH THE INVESTMENT

From green roofs that absorb rainwater before it can flow off a building to bioretention areas that filter stormwater before it flows to the sewer system, there are many ways that communities can beautify the landscape, remove pollutants from stormwater, and protect your health at the same time. Replacing hard paving with permeable pavers and installing pocket parks are other ways your community can keep stormwater from getting polluted. Adding this kind of “green infrastructure” and promoting green spaces can help protect our local waterways and improve our community.

AFTER: PERMEABLE PAVING



BEFORE: ALLEY WAY



Here are just a few of the benefits of investing in these innovative activities:

- Increase the amount of rain that soaks into the ground and reduce the amount of polluted rain going down storm drains.
- Minimize flooding by improving drainage on sidewalks, streets, and even your backyard.
- Improve the community by creating attractive, green spaces that encourage physical activity, recreation, and natural habitat creation.
- Reduce heat, noise, and air pollution in urban areas by replacing pavement where possible with plants.

AFTER: POCKET PARK



- Promote economic growth and tourism and create local jobs from green infrastructure construction projects and maintenance activities.

HOW DO WE PAY FOR STORMWATER MANAGEMENT?

Like other public health and safety services we value such as police and fire departments, funding is often necessary to create and maintain green infrastructure such as rain gardens, green roofs, and bioretention areas. These projects help reduce pollution from stormwater and add value to the community.

Here are a few ways communities invest in stormwater management at the local level:

- **Utility fees:** Similar to the fees you may pay for water, sewer, and garbage removal, you may see a stormwater utility fee on your tax or water bill to collect essential funds that are needed to manage stormwater where you live.
- **Municipal bonds:** Just as they do for schools and other local improvement projects, your local government could levy a bond to

pay for stormwater projects that benefit the whole community.

Public funds: Federal and state governments have many funding options for stormwater projects.

- **Private property improvements:** When businesses and institutions in your area invest in green roofs, permeable paving in parking lots, and other stormwater management measures, everyone benefits.

Support these solutions and be stormwater smart for a better community.



BE STORMWATER SMART

Invest in Ways to Improve Your Community

