

Use permeable pavements

Permeable pavements look much like any other paved surface, but allow water to seep through to the soil below. Permeable materials can be used to construct driveways, sidewalks, or blocks for landscaping. While permeable pavements cost a little more than a traditional paved surface, they substantially reduce the amount of runoff that needs to be accommodated by stormwater systems, lowering the treatment cost for the citizens of Lake Forest Park and mitigating property erosion. Permeable pavements are also very easy to maintain, needing only to be vacuumed once a year to remove any loose dirt or rocks.

To find out more, visit

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Permeable_paving



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Low Impact Development



Permeable driveway surface.



What is low impact development?

Low Impact Development (or LID) techniques enable homeowners to reduce the impact of stormwater runoff on the ecosystem of Lake Forest Park. Often, making a few simple changes to how you landscape and develop your home or business can decrease water pollution and promote a healthier environment for our native habitat, children, and pets.

Why should I care?

Stormwater runoff impacts us all. Pollutants in stormwater cause unhealthy conditions for fish, birds, and amphibians living in and around bodies of water where runoff is directed. These same pollutants pose health risks for our children and pets. Harmful contaminants may seep into drinking water, and recreation areas can be closed due to hazardous levels of pollutants. With severe contamination, property values are adversely impacted.

What can I do to help?

Many Low Impact Development techniques are easy to use in both new developments as well as existing structures. Individual homes, or entire neighborhoods can benefit from using LID techniques, and these low impact techniques are often less expensive to add or retrofit than traditional stormwater systems.

Harvest rainwater



Harvesting rainwater is most easily done by disconnecting downspouts attached to your home's gutters, but can also be done using free-standing rain barrels or cisterns. Harvesting rainwater is a simple, inexpensive solution to stormwater runoff. Existing downspouts can be diverted to either rain gardens or rain barrels. Rain barrels add the benefit of collecting water for later use, reducing the burden on local water supply systems during dry periods.

To find out more, visit <http://www.marc.org/Environment/Water/downspout.htm>

Install a green roof

Also called a vegetated roof, green roofing involves construction of a layer of vegetation on top of your roof's existing structural element. Green roofs absorb rainfall, and filter pollutants before they reach drainage systems. Green roofs can be added to existing homes, and a green roof will: help your roof to last longer, reduce your energy costs, and make your home quieter. Homeowners with accessible roofs can also use a green roof as an ideal location for a garden.

To find out more, visit <http://www.greenroofs.com>

Build a rain garden

Rain gardens reduce stormwater runoff, as well as filter sediments and pollutants before they enter surface waterways and storm sewers. A rain garden is an inexpensive and attractive landscape feature that reduces pollutants in our community. Rain gardens can be built near drain pipes and disconnected downspouts to collect runoff from roofs and other impermeable areas. A rain garden can also be used in conjunction with a buried reservoir to handle and store even greater volumes of water.



Photo by extension horticulture.

To find out more, visit <http://www.raingardennetwork.com>

Construct a grassy swale

Grassy swales are similar to rain gardens. A grassy swale is an area of thick grass or vegetation planted along a street or driveway and designed to collect and filter runoff. A swale absorbs stormwater and reduces the amount of overall runoff in an area. It also acts to reduce the speed at which excess runoff travels, and so can reduce the amount of erosion in an area. Grassy swales are inexpensive solutions to prevent runoff along impermeable areas.

To find out more, visit <http://www.handymanhowto.com/2008/08/26/making-a-grassy-drainage-swale/>