

Things to Know

Cattails: Cattails and other emergent plants are good for stormwater ponds. They help by stabilizing shorelines, filtering sediments, taking up nutrients, and providing habitat for wildlife. Cattail stems host colonies of micro-organisms that clean contaminants from the water. Cattails grow where their roots can stay wet so they will not spread over upland lawns.

Geese: Allowing cattails to grow on the aquatic benches will keep geese from entering adjacent lawns. Geese avoid walking through tall plants where they can't see predators approaching.

Mosquitoes: Mosquitoes breed in stagnant water. Properly designed and maintained stormwater ponds minimize stagnant water. Frogs, toads, and birds that live in the cover provided by cattails and other plants help control insects. Mosquitoes are more likely to breed in old tires, clogged roof gutters, and other stagnant water sources.

Algae Blooms: If a soil test determines that the nearby lawn area needs fertilizer, use phosphorus-free fertilizers. Leave a buffer of unfertilized lawn around the pond. Keep grass clippings and pet droppings out of the pond. Wash vehicles on the lawn, not the driveway, to prevent soap and other chemicals from entering the pond.

Erosion & Siltation: Plant native shrubs and grasses near the water's edge. Watch for invasive plants, such as purple loosestrife, and remove it before it becomes established. Watch for muskrat and beaver activity that might undermine the pond.



Stormwater ponds provide stormwater management and protection of water quality downstream, while also creating vistas and recreational opportunities. Stormwater ponds are focal points of many communities, often equipped with fountains and walking trails. Opportunities for birdwatching and wildlife viewing encourage residents to enjoy life in nature. Care of the stormwater pond should include both understanding the benefits to the neighborhood and the responsibility to protect the pond from contamination.

Fertilizer, lawn clippings, litter, and debris entering the stormwater pond damage its function and impair its beauty. For more information on your neighborhood stormwater pond, reach out to your local municipality.



**For more information on protecting
our waterways, please go to**
www.owsc.org

Living Near a Stormwater Pond



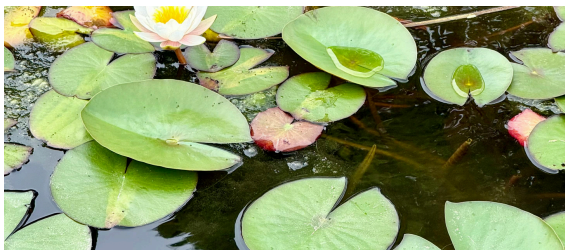
What is a Stormwater Pond?

The purpose of a stormwater ponds is to collect, store, and purify stormwater runoff. They are built to improve water quality and prevent downstream flooding.

The construction of commercial and residential developments greatly increases the amount of impervious surfaces, which causes stormwater to move at higher velocities. These factors cause soil erosion, resulting in sedimentation of downstream water bodies.

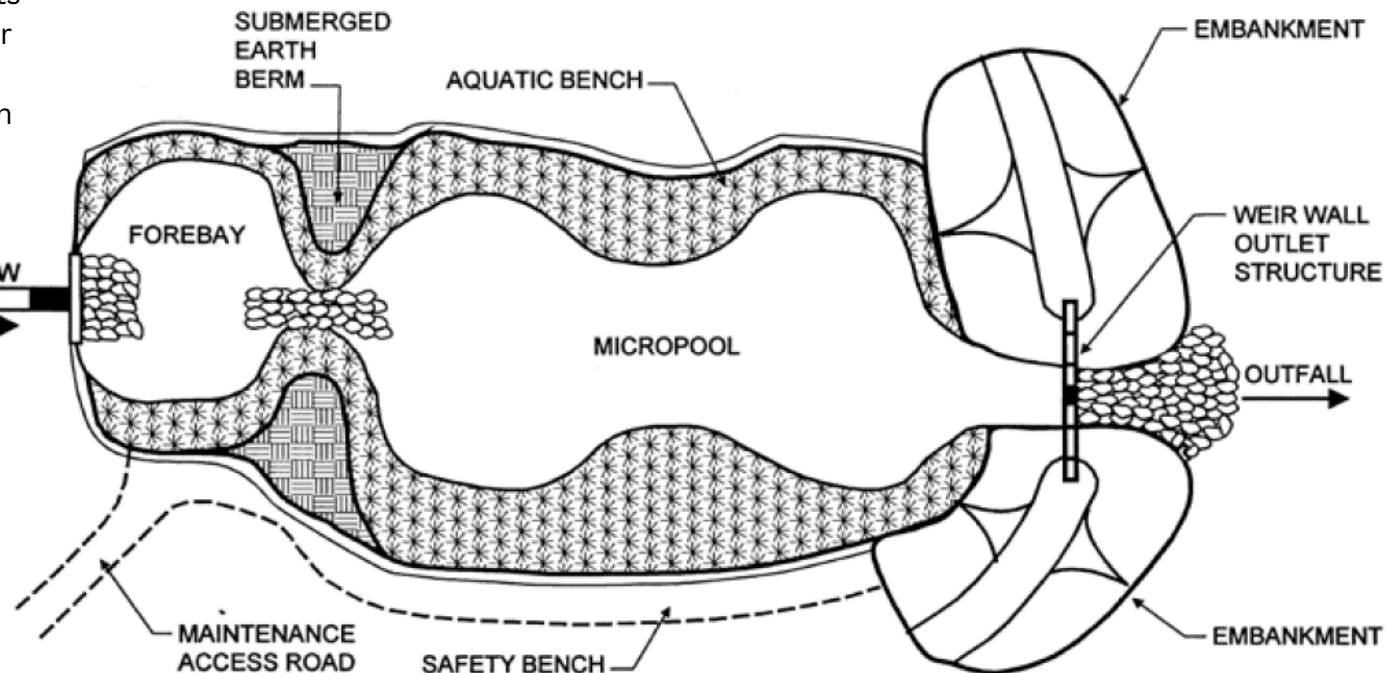
Rainwater and melting snow moving across pavement, sidewalks, roofs, parking lots, patios, and roads can also pick up potential sources of pollution along their journey to a local waterway. Contaminants from construction, polluted runoff from streets and driveways, lawn chemicals, and other unwanted materials are carried in stormwater, deteriorating water quality in streams and lakes.

Stormwater ponds intercept runoff and allow for sediments and contaminants to settle out, therefore protecting water quality, municipal infrastructure, and private property.



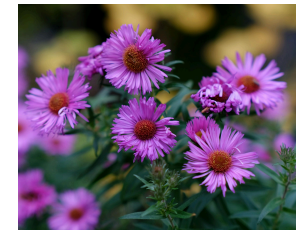
Components of a Stormwater Pond

Stormwater ponds are built with a forebay to catch and settle out the greatest amount of sediment. Water leaving the forebay enters the larger storage area. An outlet structure and outfall area permit water to leave the pond in a controlled flow. Shallow areas near the shore create places for plants to grow and provide a margin of safety for people and pets. The forebay usually needs to be cleaned periodically to retain capacity as sediments settle out of stormwater flows. Access to the pond will be necessary.



Maximize the Pond

Stormwater ponds can be beautiful as well as a useful part of the community landscape. Native plants that require no fertilizer or pesticide will do well near a pond area. Button bush, elderberry, witch hazel, New England Aster, bee balm, Joe Pye weed, and other native shrubs and forbs will entice birds and butterflies to the pond. Little care is needed after these plants are established as they are adapted to native soils and climate. Bluebird and purple martin houses will add to the richness of the setting.



*Diagram sourced from the New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual; Chapter 6, Section 6.1