

What is a Retention Pond?

- An engineered pond/lake used to temporarily hold stormwater runoff, sediments and pollution before the water flows downstream.
- A best management practice for treatment of stormwater; used in urban areas to manage contaminated runoff from roofs, paved surfaces and managed turf areas.
- Surrounding vegetated buffer gardens and aeration devices are recommended features.
- Tend to be large; can become a passive community amenity.

Why should we care?

- Controls water quantity; stormwater flows in, is stored, and gets discharged slowly through an outlet structure into the stream system, reducing downstream flooding and protecting stream channels.
- Improves water quality; sediment, pollution and trash are reduced through natural processes such as biological uptake, decomposition, and settling before water reaches stream system.



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What is a Retention Pond Buffer Garden?

- A vegetated area located between the top of the slope and the waters edge to reduce stormwater flow and filter pollutants and sediment.
- Gardens should be planted in the fall with native, non-woody perennials mixing evergreens and non-evergreens. Selections should include flowers for pollinators and seeds for birds and wildlife.

Why should we care?

- Improves drainage, reduces costly sediment build up and improves water quality.
- Requires minimal maintenance, saving as much as 48% in maintenance costs.
- Provides food and habitat for wildlife, color throughout the seasons, and a barrier to litter, leading to a cleaner environment downstream.
- Reduces bank erosion and discourages waterfowl and people from entering the pond.



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Maintaining Your Buffer Garden

Tall and dense buffer vegetation helps keep contaminants out of the ground water, discourages geese, and keeps trash from entering the retention pond.

To maintain a healthy buffer garden:

Do:

- Once per year, mow the vegetation in the winter to a height of 6 to 12 inches.
- Remove mowed vegetation from the area so it does not clog the pond.
- Hire a Certified Pesticide Applicator to control woody seedlings and nuisance plants.
- Plant colorful perennials such as coneflower, black-eyed Susan, and irises around the buffer perimeter to provide visual interest and attract pollinators.

Don't:

- Apply pesticides (e.g. 'Round-Up'); you can damage the pond's desirable vegetation and the aquatic ecosystem.
- Mow or weed-whack the vegetation during routine grass-cutting.



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Retention Pond Do's and Don'ts

A retention pond can be a beautiful and functional addition to your landscape if properly cared for. To maintain a healthy retention pond:

Do:

- Create a buffer garden.
- Minimize or eliminate use of lawn chemicals.
- Pick up dog waste regularly, especially before rain.
- Get a certified pesticide applicator when chemical treatment is necessary.
- Promptly address erosion, burrows, algae or other problems.
- Enjoy the wildlife that is attracted to your retention pond!

Don't:

- Throw debris into the retention pond.
- Allow plants to grow on water surface.
- Feed waterfowl, turtles or fish.
- Mow to the waters edge.



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Does Your Retention Pond Have...



Excessive algae?



Woody shrubs, or trees on the bank?



Bare soil or erosion?



Mosquitos or larvae?



Signs of animal burrows, geese?



An accumulation of trash or debris?



A build up of grass clippings?



Nuisance plants, cattails, water lilies, reed grass?

Answering YES to any of these questions indicates a need for corrective action. For more information:

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