

Practical Maintenance Guidelines For Stormwater Ponds

One of the main purposes of a stormwater pond is to remove pollutants before they are transported to the Sarasota Bay. Stormwater ponds will never be pristine swimming or fishing lakes (i.e.) clear of vegetation or phytoplankton because their purpose is to trap and transform pollutants before they're transported downstream. Some algae and plants that homeowners sometimes find objectionable help provide this pollution removal function.

Stormwater is not very dirty. It starts as clean rain and picks up pollutants as it flows. If you keep your landscape and ponds clean you can produce clean runoff.

It is important to note that stormwater runoff is currently considered the largest contributor to degraded water quality in Florida.

Your stormwater pond must be viewed as living, dynamic system which requires ongoing maintenance and care to be effective in both flood and pollution control. In most instances, addressing water quality and pond problems after they occur can be challenging and costly. Preventing pollutants from entering watersheds and proper management of the ponds are more cost-effective strategies than dealing with problems after they have developed. Remember the old saying "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure"? The purpose of this document is to give guidance to communities by providing a compilation of best practices for stormwater pond management – Best Management Practices (BMPs). This is intended to be a living document and will be updated as needed.

Some Best Management Practices for stormwater ponds are:

- To help control erosion and filter out pollution establish a buffer or low maintenance zone of at least 3 feet around pond banks;
- Avoid applying fertilizer on hard surfaces like curbs, sidewalks and roads;
- Keep the use of all chemicals to a minimum;
- Keep grass clippings on lawns and off streets and sidewalks (where they wash into drains and enter ponds);
- Pick up pet waste to prevent harmful bacteria and organisms from entering waterways;
- Adjust fertilizer amount to account for the nutrients in reclaimed water if that is the source of outdoor irrigation;
- Keep irrigation off impervious surfaces and out of ponds and wetlands;
- Be mindful that many pond problems often result from poor general landscape maintenance practices;
- Develop a maintenance plan for the entire stormwater pond drainage system and maintain records of all work done.



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RESOURCES

Stormwater Systems in Your Neighborhood

SWFWMD

https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/sites/default/files/storm_products/stormwater_systems.pdf

How to Operate & Maintain Your Stormwater Management System

SWFWMD

<https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/sites/default/files/medias/documents/HowToOperMaintSMSinternet.pdf>

Stormwater Ponds: A Citizen's Guide to Their Purpose and Management

USDA, SBEP, and SWFWMD

http://www.palmerranch.net/wss/clients/154/asset/s/c154_resources/20170411125606357.pdf

Resource Appendix

Palmer Ranch Master Association, Beautiful Ponds, and Aquatic Conservation

http://www.palmerranch.net/wss/clients/154/asset/s/c154_resources/20181101123657991.pdf

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Guidelines for Community Associations: Considerations for Selecting a Landscape Contractor and Writing an Effective Landscaping Contract

UF/IFAS

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep347>

Inventory & map all environmental infrastructure / natural assets: lakes, lake buffers / easements, wetlands, wetland buffers, mitigated wetlands, drainage system, landscape buffers, upland preserves, etc. To obtain a copy of your community's Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) as-built plans, visit:

<http://www18.swfwmd.state.fl.us/erp/erp/search/ERPSearch.aspx>



Acronyms

- CE** Control Elevation is the water level just as it starts running out the water control structure
- COE** Unites States Army Corp of Engineers
- DEP** Florida Department of Environment Protection
- FDACS**..... Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services issues licenses for herbicide applicators.
- FWC** Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission governs wildlife issues
- SHWL** Seasonal High Water Level is the lake or wetland water level typical during the summer
- SNAP** Statewide Nuisance Alligator Program allows homeowner associations to take more control of alligator removal
- SWFWMD** Southwest Florida Water Management District is the main agency that regulates stormwater ponds & wetlands throughout their 16-county district.
- WCS**..... Water Control Structure is the concrete box that allows water to flow out of the lake at a specific elevation.

This information is brought to you by the Palmer Ranch Watershed / Natural Assets Committee. Their mission is to work with the Palmer Ranch Master Association and Sub-Associations to increase environmental awareness, appreciation, conservation and restoration through education and outreach, community wide standards and best management practices.