



Clean water Connections from raindrop to river



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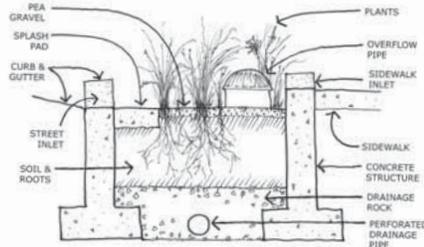


Stormwater Plantings: New Options Provide Many Benefits

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You may have noticed that street design has been changing over the years. New crosswalks and bike lanes make roads safer for all users. Another change you may notice is in the parking strip between the street and the sidewalk. These street-side planting strips are stormwater planters, and are part of an on-going effort to improve water quality in Eugene. The planters are sunken along the sides of the street to intercept running water, and shaped to funnel polluted water through a living filtration system of plants and soil. These systems capture materials such



as fertilizers, oil and dirt and slow down the water to help prevent erosion and flooding.

The soil in these filtration systems works to remove pollution and allow water to soak in. It contains mineral particles that help water to penetrate deeply, and organic matter to support plant health and trap pollution. Soil mixtures also contain microorganisms that contribute to breakdown of chemicals. Plant roots also add oxygen to the soil, creating chemical reactions that increase soil filtration. Pollutants such as trash and dirt can become tangled in the vegetation, while smaller pollutants can be locked into the soil or absorbed by plants.

The structural components of stormwater planters are carefully designed to support both plant health and filtration. The main component is concrete, a material that is durable and can be formed into any shape. Concrete is

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The stormwater planter at East 29th Avenue and Amazon Parkway (top) is designed to carry and filter runoff. Many native plants, including the spreading rush (above) are chosen for these planters as they can handle both our wet winters and dry summer months.



Small steps, big changes

Healthy yard care begins with thoughtful pest management

Are recent news stories about the health consequences and regulation of pesticides inspiring you to explore a more natural approach to yard care? Learn about less-toxic options and beneficial bugs on page 5.



Pesky bugs, unwanted weeds and unhealthy plants can be frustrating to even the most enthusiastic gardener. While garden centers and hardware stores have shelves overflowing with products to fix many of these common problems, you may want to consider a more long-term approach before loading up your cart (and emptying your wallet). Besides saving money, you'll be doing your family, pets and local waterways a favor too.

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Public Works

Stormwater Management Program
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Variety of Fish Indicates Healthy Habitat



Native fish captured:

Speckled dace
Northern pikeminnow
Prickly sculpin
Largescale sucker
Redside shiner
Cutthroat trout

Non-native fish captured:

Green sunfish
Western mosquitofish
Yellow bullhead catfish

The Parks and Open Space division manages Delta Ponds for a variety of purposes including recreation, wildlife viewing, water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat. To improve our understanding of how fish are using Delta Ponds, we teamed up with colleagues at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to conduct fish sampling in several locations.

On two separate days in February, biologists used nets and backpack electrofishing equipment to attempt to capture fish in the ponds. We successfully captured and then safely released nine species of fish including three non-native and six native species. One of the more exciting captures for the crew was a cutthroat trout, a migratory fish that was rarely seen locally in recent years due to habitat loss. Regular sampling helps us figure out if the ponds are working as intended and helps the City decide if and when changes might need to be made.

Historically, the Willamette River criss-crossed the Willamette Valley in a series of braided channels. As cities like Eugene grew, development restricted the ability of the river to spread and meander, reducing available places for fish to live or rest on their travels up and downstream. The restoration of Delta Ponds in the heart of Eugene reconnected part of the river with its historic channel. During the winter, when river levels are high, water flows from the Willamette into the ponds near Valley River Center and flows out downstream of Beltline highway. In addition to providing habitat for fish and wildlife, the area also collects stormwater from surrounding neighborhoods. Natural processes in Delta Ponds help clean the water before it flows into the Willamette River. ♠



In the photo below (from 2012), you can see where the Delta Ponds connects to the Willamette River just north of Valley River Center. The slower flow in this side channel allows young fish to rest and feed before returning to the main river.



Photo by Philip Bayles

Water Bottle Refill Stations Reduce Waste at Events

The City of Eugene has long supported waste reduction at events hosted in our community. As part of this ongoing work, in 2016 the City purchased ten water bottle refilling stations in partnership with Lane County Waste Management. Use of refilling stations and reusable bottles can safeguard our local water resources while reducing litter associated with one-time use water bottles—a significant source of plastic pollution in our waterways.

Disposable plastic water bottles are a major source of waste in the US—particularly at large gatherings. Only a fraction of these bottles are ever recycled.

Utilizing tap water and refillable bottles at events not only reduces waste, it saves energy and helps reduce the greenhouse gas emissions and pollution caused by the manufacture of disposable bottles.

“Disposable water bottles are probably the single largest source of litter that volunteers pull out of the river during our clean up events,” says Michelle Emmons, the Great Willamette Clean Up Event Coordinator for Lane County. And those bottles add up. Each year during the Eugene leg of the annual Clean Up, local volunteers remove 70 cubic yards or more of trash and other materials from the river.

In addition to reducing waste, the stations serve as a tool to highlight Eugene’s clean and safe drinking water. Refilling is a cost-effective alternative to bottled water. Having readily available water stations normalizes the use of refillable bottles for residents and visitors. Since Eugene’s drinking water supply receives annual recognition as one of the top five public drinking water sources by quality and taste in the U.S., refilling is a great option.

The water stations have been used for City event programming such as Party in the Parks and Eugene Sunday Streets. Use of the stations by the public during the July 2016 Sunday Streets event reduced measurable bottled water use by 43 percent from 2015. By purchasing these durable water stations, Eugene has joined other municipalities in the US—including Richmond, VA, Boston, MA, and Portland, ME—in providing alternatives to single-use water bottles for the community.

Refill stations are available to event producers for events that are open to the public. Our community values the health of our neighborhoods, parks, rivers, and streams. We can all do our part by bringing a reusable beverage container to events and filling up on the safe and delicious drinking water that we all invest in. For more information, contact Deveron Musgrave at Deveron.r.musgrave@ci.eugene.or.us or call 541-682-6842. ♠





Many native wetland plants from our region, including these featured here, are excellent at removing pollution and provide food and habitat for wildlife.

Plants shown—A. Slough sedge, B. Oregon grape, C. Osoberry, D. Oregon sunshine, E. Oregon iris

Stormwater Plantings *continued from page 1*

poured and formed so that water flows into and through the planter. Newer planters are designed with an inlet that allows large dirt particles to settle out before entering the planter. These inlets are cleaned on a monthly schedule by the Public Works Green Infrastructure Maintenance Team, increasing the longevity of the planter. Pea gravel is placed between plants to limit erosion and weed growth. Each planter also has an outlet pipe raised above the designed maximum water level to prevent flooding during large storms.

What makes the plantings so special?

Plants are carefully chosen for their ability to clean the runoff and to tolerate being partially submerged for a large portion of the year. Many native wetland plants are excellent at removing pollution and also provide benefits for wildlife. Other plant species are chosen based on drought tolerance, deep roots, hardiness and physical ability to catch trash and debris in their foliage. These plantings help the soil to absorb more water, absorb pollutants, create an environment where microorganisms can thrive, and add organic matter to the soil.

Since most of our rainfall occurs during the winter months when many plants are dormant, evergreen plants are often a better choice for providing water quality treatment. Studies have shown that the best filtration in a stormwater planting is achieved by having a diverse mix of plants which contribute to a diverse microorganism community. Some native plants that have been found to thrive in stormwater plantings include:

Slough sedge (*Carex obnupta*)

Sedges (*Carex* species) are valuable contributors to water quality and are able to live in the wettest parts of the planting. Slough sedge is a fast growing evergreen perennial plant with serrated shiny leaves that grows 2-5 feet tall. This plant can spread by roots as well as by seed and thrives in poorly drained areas. This species is one of the main plants in our stormwater planters. It thrives best in the full sun, but can also withstand some shady conditions. The tough, half-inch-wide, bright to dark green leaves of this plant have been used for basket weaving.

Spreading rush (*Juncus patens*)

Rushes (*Juncus* species) are evergreen perennials that provide excellent pollution filtration. Spreading rush is a tough drought-resistant plant that can handle full sun to partial shade and performs very well in the wettest portion of the planter. It grows to 2 feet tall and spreads by roots as well as seed. The spikey, upright foliage is a blue-green color, and the seeds form in May to August in small brownish-red clusters that attract birds.

Oregon sunshine (*Eriophyllum lanatum*)

Oregon sunshine is a perennial herb that grows 1-2 feet tall. The leaves are a woolly gray color with fine soft hairs. The bright yellow flowers are one-inch wide, bloom from May to August, and attract pollinators. This plant prefers full sun and can be planted along the side slopes near the waterline of a stormwater planting. Oregon sunshine is drought tolerant and spreads by roots and by seed.

Oregon iris (*Iris tenax*)

Oregon iris is a native perennial herb that grows to 8-12 inches tall. The leaves are thin, bright green and tough (tenax is latin for tenacious) and have been used to weave into animal snares. The bright purple-blue to lavender flowers bloom from April to June and attract pollinators. This low-growing plant spreads from rhizome (a root-like stem) and from seed, and does best on the well-drained side slopes of a stormwater planting.

Oregon grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*)

Oregon grape is a 2-8 foot tall native evergreen shrub that has dark green, tough, shiny, 2-3 inch long, holly-like leaflets. The yellow flower clusters that form from March to May are our state flower and turn into purple-blue, grape-like clusters of sour fruit. This shrub can handle some moist soil conditions and performs well on the sides of stormwater planters. Oregon grape can be found in the forest under-story and at the edge of meadows, and has been used both medicinally and as a yellow dye for baskets.

Osoberry (*Oemleria cerasiformis*)

Osoberry is a native deciduous large shrub or small tree that can grow to be 15-20 feet tall. The lime green oval leaves are 3-5 inches long. The early blooming white flowers hang in clusters and turn into yellow and then purple fruit clusters that are edible. This plant is dioecious, which means a male and a female plant are needed in order to have fruit. Osoberry likes moist soil, and will perform well on the sloped edges of a stormwater planter. This shrub grows best in the shade, but can also tolerate full sun. 💧

If you would like to learn more about stormwater planters, or would like to volunteer to help maintain them, please contact Fred Lockhart, stormwater services program analyst, at 541-682-4944.

For more information about plant selection, please contact Ted Shriro, stormwater services technical specialist, at 541-682-4924.

Solutions for soggy yards

Is your yard wet? You are not alone.



Eugene has had over 35 inches of rain this winter, and it has resulted in some spongy lawns. The above average rainfall has resulted in higher than normal groundwater levels, increased underground spring activity and saturated soils. Basically, the water has no place to go.

Solutions for reducing water depends on how wet your property is and where the water is. If the

water is near the home, a French drain, or perimeter drain may be an option. When installed correctly, French drains are very efficient at collecting the water and moving it away from the home. The key is proper installation and slope away from the property for the water to travel.

It is also possible that your current drainage system could be part of the problem. A clogged roof drain can cause water to back up over your gutters or leak out under your lawn. Test the system by flooding the gutter using a garden hose and see if it drains free. If there is blockage in an underground pipe, you may need help from a plumber or consider installing a new line.

Altering the landscaping is another option. Adding or changing plants or trees, amending the soil to break down clay, and aerating the soil are all options that may help address the issue. Be sure to choose plants and trees that thrive in wet soils. Once established, they can take in a lot of water and improve the quality of the soil.

Amending or aerating the soil can help your lawn drain better. Depending on the composition of your soil, there might be soil amendments that can help water drain, or it might be useful to aerate. Aeration can be especially helpful if your soil has been compacted over time from use.

Some solutions require a permit. For more information, call 541-682-8400 or stop by the Permit & Information Center at 99 W 10th Ave. A good resource for understanding soils is the Lane County Extension Service at 541-344-5859, or stop by the office at 996 Jefferson St. in Eugene. ♦

Live near a stormwater ditch or channel?

Keep it flowing!

At first glance, it may be hard to imagine that ditches, swales or backyard drainage channels could serve a useful purpose. But appearances can be deceiving. Ditches and swales are built into developed areas to provide a place for stormwater runoff from roads, roofs and other hard surfaces to collect and travel from one place to another. During the rainy season, they may keep water from spilling onto roadways where flooding can occur. If they are planted with grass, they can help filter and absorb pollutants in the runoff as well as carrying water.

Ditches and swales are part of your neighborhood's network for managing stormwater runoff and reducing flooding.

If you fill a portion of the swale or ditch with plants, rock, or beauty bark, you might affect a neighbor's property, damage the neighborhood stormwater pond, or make it easier for more pollutants to enter a nearby water body.

Here's an example of an innocent mistake made by a homeowner who thought the ditch outside his house was unsightly. He decided to plant it with English ivy. While the natural ditch was designed to convey water away from the road, the ivy-filled ditch was less capable of transporting water. The ivy, which is an invasive non-native plant, choked out native plants and became a nuisance to manage.

Similarly, a ditch or swale filled with beauty bark or undersized gravel can clog drainage pipes and disturb the flow to a local stormwater pond or stream.

Does this mean you can't do anything with a swale or ditch? Not necessarily. Just remember that it's an important part of your local drainage system and was designed to benefit your site. If you want to make changes, check with the staff at the Permit & Information Center or call 541-682-8400 to make sure you are not covering a public drainage easement. ♦

Debris disposal options

When grass clippings or yard debris pile up, consider these options:

- ◆ Grass clippings can be used as mulch around plants in your yard, or put into a compost pile.
- ◆ Waste haulers in our area provide residents with a yard waste container that can be put out on trash pickup days.
- ◆ Branches or brush can be taken to local yard debris recyclers such as Rexius or Lane Forest Products.



While an empty drainage channel may look like a good landscape project or a great place to dump yard waste, both options could bring flooding to your neighborhood when the rain returns.

Planning a Benefit Car Wash?
Choose our stormwater-friendly kit for your fund-raising event

Use our free, fish-friendly car wash kits that keep soap suds out of storm drains and rivers. To learn more, check out our online video at happyrivers.org. To reserve a kit, call 541-682-4929 in Eugene or 541-726-3694 in Springfield.

FISH-FRIENDLY CAR WASH

Bugs: Invite the 'good guys' to dinner

Bothered by insects and other pest infestations in your yard or garden? Many of these troublesome bugs are only a symptom of more serious problems such as poor soil, an unsuitable location or overwatering.

These "bad" bugs include aphids, ants, bagworms, beetles, borers, caterpillars, crickets, chiggers, chinch bugs, fleas, grasshoppers, grub worms, lacebugs, leaf hoppers, leaf miners, mealybugs, mosquitoes, nematodes, pill bugs, spider mites, roaches, scale, squash bugs, slugs, thrips and whiteflies. While this seems like a long list, these destructive insects only account for about one to two percent of the insect population.

Heavy infestations of these harmful insects can be controlled with organic techniques and products. Others may seem to require more aggressive chemical treatments. However, most pesticides—organic or inorganic—kill more beneficial insects than pests. That's a problem.

Good insects comprise at least 98 percent of the bug population and deserve our protection. They include ladybugs, green lacewings, ground beetles, predatory stink bugs, praying mantis, minute pirate bugs, dragonflies, damselflies, fireflies, assassin bugs, spiders, wasps and predatory mites. To start, here are two "good" bugs to recognize and encourage in your yard or garden.

Ladybugs, also called lady beetles or ladybird beetles, are a very beneficial group. They are natural enemies of many insects, especially aphids and other sap feeders. A single lady beetle may eat as many as 5,000 aphids in its lifetime. Adult lady beetles can be yellow, pink, orange, red, or black, and usually are marked with distinct spots. This is a type of warning coloration



to discourage other animals that may try to eat them. Adult females usually lay clusters of eggs on plants near aphid, scale, or mealybug colonies. The larvae are also predators. After feeding on insect prey for several weeks, the larva pupates on a leaf. Adults tend to move on once pests get scarce, while the larvae remain and search for more prey.

Green lacewings are an often under-appreciated group of beneficial insects. As with lady beetles, they and their larvae are important predators of many types of soft bodied insects and insect eggs. Lacewings are common in the spring, summer, and fall and their contribution to insect control is immense.



The adult green lacewing is about 3/4 inch long, light green with lacy wings. They are weak fliers and are commonly found near aphid colonies. The adults feed mostly on nectar, pollen, and honeydew but with some species the adults will feed on insects.

The eggs are either laid singly or in small groups on the tip of a hair-like stalk. Females will usually deposit the egg close to a food source for the larvae. The larvae, called aphid lions, feed on soft-bodied insects such as caterpillars and some beetles as well as aphids. This is the most beneficial stage of the lacewing life cycle for gardeners. 💧

Small Steps *continued from page 1*

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a proven method of pest control that emphasizes simple, inexpensive prevention practices that cause the least harm to people and the environment. Rather than using a temporary fix, IPM focuses on eliminating the cause of pests by minimizing access to food, water, and hiding places. Understanding the basic steps helps you map out an overall plan to keep your yard and garden healthy and robust.

Here are some tips for starting IPM in your garden:

1. Learn about your plants and the weeds and bugs that affect them.
2. Choose the right plants. Plant native species whenever possible. Native plants are better protected by their own "immune systems" and their relationships with other plants and animals in the area. You may also look for plants that are pest-resistant. Diversifying the garden with a variety of plants will help the plants protect each other from pests. For example, small flowered plants like daisies, mint, and rosemary attract many insects that eat the pests. Check with a local garden shop or nursery for recommendations.
3. Maintain healthy, fertile soil by rotating your plants, adding compost, and mulching.
4. Plant early to avoid the worst bug season.
5. Allow growth of the pests' natural predators. Ladybugs, ground beetles, and birds eat many pests. Remember, spraying chemicals often kills the beneficial bugs too.
6. Work with your hands! A hoe, spade, and your hands are the best tools to combat weeds. Getting close to your plants will help you identify problems and remove pests and damaged plants. Tilling can eliminate many weeds as well. Pruning plants helps remove diseased parts, leaving the plant's nutrients for the healthy parts. Always prune back to a main branch or stem—leaving "stubs" opens a door for pests.
7. Keep a garden journal where you record when you see pests, what they look like, what they have done to the plants, and the actions taken. In this way, you will learn what works and what doesn't while experimenting with new techniques. 💧



Consider this principle of ecology – *everything is linked to everything else*

This is why pesticides often have unintended consequences. For example, don't be surprised if songbirds leave your yard after pesticides have been sprayed. Many birds are directly harmed by pesticides; others leave because the insects they feed on have been killed.



A word about weeds

Battling weeds can be time-consuming, frustrating, and expensive. Your best defense against weeds is a landscape plan. A landscape plan will help you decide if grass is the best alternative for the problem areas in your lawn. Soil contains thousands of weed seeds and even healthy lawns will have some weeds. Therefore, learn to live with a few of them. If weeds start to invade your lawn, examine your maintenance program and make the necessary adjustments to produce a healthier lawn. Remember weak lawns lead to weedy lawns, not vice versa.

If you decide that an herbicide is necessary, consider spot treatments rather than treating the entire yard. 💧



Stormwater seepage can waste resources

The City of Eugene has separate stormwater and wastewater (sanitary sewer) collection systems. The stormwater collection system conveys stormwater runoff when rain or snowmelt flows over the land. The water is carried to waterways including the Willamette River, or percolates into the groundwater. Wastewater, consisting primarily of domestic sewage, is conveyed to the Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission's regional wastewater treatment plant prior to discharge into the river.



Problems occur when stormwater finds ways to seep or drain into the wastewater system (for example, at this broken joint), creating extra load for the treatment plant.

Common areas where inflow and infiltration occur

On Private Property:

1. Improper foundation or roof drain connections
2. Uncapped cleanout
3. Root intrusion
4. Breaks or open joints in service lateral

In Public System:

1. Breaks or open joints in lateral or main pipes
2. Faulty manhole covers
3. Open joints or cracks in service chamber



What are inflow and infiltration?

Inflow and infiltration (I/I) are terms for the ways that stormwater and groundwater sometimes make their way into the wastewater collection system. Inflow occurs when stormwater enters the wastewater system directly through our roof drains, storm drains, crawl space or basement sump pumps, and yard or foundation drains that are improperly connected to the City's sanitary sewer lines.

Infiltration, a more stealthy contributor to the problem, occurs when groundwater seeps into cracked or broken sanitary sewer pipes. The water then flows to the regional plant for unnecessary treatment instead of filtering down and recharging the aquifer.

Inflow and infiltration can enter at several places, including the wastewater collection system located primarily in the street, and the private sanitary sewer line (called a lateral line) connecting your home to the public system.

Reducing I/I from the public system

Reducing I/I into the wastewater system helps prevent sewer lines from being overwhelmed and spilling untreated wastewater into a nearby stream or river. The City has an active I/I reduction program for the public wastewater collection system that includes smoke testing and camera video inspection to identify defects and improper connections, and pipeline replacement or repair.

Private lateral lines—you can help

Identifying and maintaining private lateral lines are the responsibility of the home or building owner. If the City or an owner identifies a source of I/I into the private lateral line, it is the owner's responsibility to correct the situation. Below are a few suggestions for homeowners to help reduce I/I from the wastewater collection system.

- Familiarize yourself with your house's plumbing system and identify the discharge point for roof drains, foundation drains, and sump pump discharges from your basement or crawl space. Disconnect any of these sources that are connected to the sanitary system and reroute to outdoor lawn areas or the stormwater drainage system.
- Inspect your sanitary sewer clean-out — make sure the cap is on tight and the pipe has not been damaged.
- Don't plant trees or shrub over or near where your sanitary pipe is buried. Roots can break pipes.
- If you find that your private line is broken, have your line repaired or replaced by a licensed contractor.
- Ask for a sanitary sewer inspection when buying a house to identify broken pipes.

For additional information got to: eugene-or.gov/1686 ♦

Utility fee increase maintains current service levels

The City of Eugene and the Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission (MWMC) plan to increase utility rates this July. The City Manager is considering a four percent wastewater user fee increase, and a four percent stormwater user fee increase. MWMC is considering a three percent increase for regional wastewater user fees. The total monthly increase for a typical Eugene household from these proposed rate changes will be roughly \$1.19 for wastewater and \$0.56 for stormwater per month.

Look for additional rate information with your July EWEB bill. For more information or questions about utility user fees, please call 541-682-4900.* ♦

Want to learn more about what we do to keep Eugene's stormwater safe and clean?

A new 8 ½ minute video presents an overview of the variety of stormwater programs and services, including infrastructure, leaf pick up, household hazardous waste disposal and spill response.

Find the link at happyivers.org

Eugene's stormwater fees are used to:

- Maintain and repair more than 600 miles of stormwater pipes and waterways
- Clean over 15,000 catch basins and curb inlets
- Eliminate illegal connections and discharges
- Protect, restore, and maintain waterways
- Remove garbage from streams and the Willamette River
- Improve how rainfall runoff is managed in developed areas through system retrofits
- Replace public drywells to protect groundwater quality
- Administer clean water regulations for construction sites, industries, and new development
- Plant and maintain street trees and median vegetation
- Monitor water quality in our local waterways through sampling and data analysis

Each year, stormwater funds allow us to:

- Collect and recycle over 18,000 cubic yards of leaves
- Sweep more than 40,000 curb miles of streets
- Provide stormwater education to 3,000 students
- Plant over 600 trees along local streams and rivers

* The City of Eugene provides Clean Water Connections to some Lane County residents within the urban growth boundary through an intergovernmental agreement. As a result, this newsletter is mailed to some residents who are not affected by this increase.

Pilot program tests composting food waste through garbage haulers

Each year, Eugene tosses 40 million pounds of food into the local landfill. Half of this food waste comes from homes.

When food waste enters the landfill, it breaks down without oxygen, causing methane—a potent greenhouse gas—to be released into the atmosphere. Landfilling food waste also leads to pollution of groundwater via leachate, which is the liquid from organic materials in the waste stream.

To reduce the amount of food waste going to the landfill, the City of Eugene launched a two-year residential curbside food waste collection pilot program. The program makes it easier for residents in single-family homes to recycle their food waste through home yard debris service already provided by garbage haulers. This service began in fall of 2016 and includes four pilot test areas across Eugene. The test areas include a select number of households in portions of Friendly, Harlow, Bethel, and South University neighborhoods, totaling about 1,500 households. Recycling food waste instead of sending it to the landfill helps keep Oregon beautiful for future generations, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and turns waste into something useful.

This pilot program builds off of the success of Eugene's commercial composting program, Love Food Not Waste®. Over 200 local businesses and schools have already been reducing waste by sending food scraps to be composted. To date, over 8,400 tons of food waste have been converted to compost and biogas. For questions or more information about the pilot, call 541-682-5655 or email wasteprevention@ci.eugene.or.us. Our web address is eugenerecycles.org



Residents in the food recycling pilot areas are able to dispose of food waste in yard debris containers.



Clean Water Connections is published by the City of Eugene Public Works Department to enhance awareness of stormwater and related surface water management issues.

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For more information about stormwater in general, write or call kathya.eva@ci.eugene.or.us 541-682-2739

happyivers.org

Eugene's flood risk makes insurance a wise choice



This past December, the Eugene area was hit hard with a severe winter storm. Ice crippled the community, downing trees, knocking out power, damaging homes and businesses. As the ice storm subsided and the temperature rose, melting ice and more rain posed an additional danger of flooding. Historically, Eugene's major flooding events have occurred in December and January, as a result of heavy rainfall combined with snowmelt. Flooding can occur anywhere, not just along rivers and streams, and all properties are at risk. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), floods are the most common and costly natural disaster in the United States.

Are you covered?

Many people are unaware that standard homeowner insurance does not cover damage due to floods. Flood insurance is a separate policy. Properties within the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), also called the 100-year floodplain, are required to carry flood insurance if they have a federally-backed loan. Properties outside the 100-year floodplain are typically not required to carry flood insurance, but may still be susceptible to flooding.

People outside of the 100-year floodplain file more than 20 percent of all National Flood Insurance flood insurance claims and receive one-third of federal disaster assistance for flooding.

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Preferred Risk Policy is designed for residential properties located in low to moderate flood risk zones, outside the SFHA. This policy carries a low annual premium rate of approximately \$425 for coverage up to \$250,000 for buildings and \$100,000 for contents.

All property owners and renters are encouraged to educate themselves about their flood risk and the benefits of flood insurance. Plan ahead, as there is typically a 30-day waiting period from the date of purchase until your policy goes into effect.

The City of Eugene provides free information regarding flood hazards for specific sites within the community and can answer many of your flood-related questions. Staff can assist with flood protection and mitigation design questions, help with local flooding concerns and make site visits.

Visit us at the Permit and Information Center, at 99 West 10th Avenue, phone 541-682-8400 or email: cwepic@ci.eugene.or.us. Offices are open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

More information is available from your insurance agent, on our website at eugene-or.gov/465, or on the federal government page at floodsmart.gov

MYTH: "My standard homeowners insurance will cover me if my house is damaged or destroyed in a flood."

FACT: Homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage. Federal flood insurance, purchased through your insurance agent or company, is the only guaranteed flood insurance coverage available for your home.

MYTH: "Flood insurance is only available for homeowners."

FACT: Flood insurance is available for both buildings and contents. Therefore, renters may purchase flood insurance for their belongings.

MYTH: "I can only buy federal flood insurance through the federal government."

FACT: You can buy federal flood insurance through most major private insurance companies and licensed property insurance agents who sell homeowners' or property insurance.



Stormwater in Summer? Yes!

The word "stormwater" sounds like it must mean water that comes from storms, right? And it is true that rain, snow and ice storms are the largest sources of stormwater in our community. But when we are thinking of ways to keep pollution out of local rivers, a different definition is used.

Stormwater includes anything that flows into the storm drain.

Here's a challenge: Think for a minute about the storm drain near your home. What kind of pollution might be getting into it during the summer months? And when it is sunny and dry, where would water and pollutants come from?



What did you think of? Did your list of pollution include dirt, soaps, fertilizers, pet waste and trash? All of these can hurt wildlife in our local waterways. Did you think of the many activities that we enjoy during the summer that include using water in our yards and driveways? Summer stormwater comes from hoses, sprinklers and buckets!

It is important for all of us to keep pollution out of the storm drain all year long.

Simple things you can do to help prevent pollution include:

- ✦ Water your lawn and garden carefully to make sure you aren't sending water (that can carry fertilizers, pet waste or loose soil) down the drain.
- ✦ Wash the car on a grassy area that can soak up the water, and use as little soap as possible. If you need to wash in the driveway, roll up a towel to direct the water over to the grass rather than letting it run down to the street.
- ✦ Don't litter! Street sweepers work all year long to help keep the roads clean, but between sweeps litter can blow into the drain and clog it, causing flooding the next time it really rains hard.
- ✦ Always pick up pet waste (in a plastic bag, throw in the trash). The next heavy rain could carry bacteria and parasites from your yard down to the drain. Yuck!

Stormwater runoff comes from rain and snowmelt that flows over land or built surfaces—such as paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops—that does not soak into the ground. People also create runoff with hoses and sprinklers that can carry pollution down to the nearby storm drain.



Come see me at Public Works Day! It's a blast!—Lily



Enjoy your summer fun—including splashing around in the sprinkler on a hot day. Just be sure to keep the water in your yard and pollution free!



Let's go! For more information, visit eugene-or.gov/pwday or call 541-682-4800.

It's Free! It's Fun! It's the Annual Public Works Day Open House!

Take a behind-the-scenes look at the many ways public works serves our community. Learn more about parks, the airport, wastewater, engineering, maintenance and more! Special guests include the Eugene Police and Fire Departments.

**Thursday, May 18 from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
1820 Roosevelt Boulevard**

- Climb aboard and explore the big trucks
- Take part in hands-on activities geared for kids of all ages
- Meet stormwater ambassador Lily the frog
- Watch staff demonstrate really cool specialized equipment

Convenient bus, van and bicycle parking is available. LTD also has a bus stop right across from the yard's main entrance.