



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FOR SMALL PROJECTS: What a Homeowner Needs to Know

What is stormwater and why is it a problem?

Stormwater is rainfall that runs off of roofs, driveways, lawns, roads, parking lots, sidewalks, farm fields, and other surfaces created or disturbed by manmade activities. This runoff picks up pollutants (such as dirt, oil, litter, pesticides, fertilizer, etc.) as it flows across these surfaces, and eventually enters local streams. While rainfall is natural, stormwater is manmade.

Large volumes of stormwater overwhelm, erode and pollute local streams, and flood low lying areas. To lessen these destructive stormwater impacts and help ensure any existing problems do not worsen, municipalities across Chester County have adopted new stormwater management ordinance standards. These new standards are a key tool in reducing these stormwater impacts, safeguarding properties from flooding and erosion, and protecting streams and local water quality.

84% of Chester County's watersheds are sources of public drinking water.



55% of Chester County's streams are listed as "impaired" (polluted) by stormwater.

Why is stormwater management important?

The purpose of **stormwater management** is to protect property, infrastructure and streams from destructive stormwater impacts by ensuring rain can be absorbed close to where it falls, thereby reducing the volume of runoff. By controlling stormwater runoff from new impervious and disturbed surfaces on individual properties, we can:

- protect downstream properties, roads and infrastructure – from increased erosion and flooding.
- protect water quality – in our streams and reservoirs to provide clean water for drinking, businesses, farming, and swimming, and for fish and other aquatic living resources.

Without effective stormwater management, problems caused by too much runoff, erosion and pollutants (such as sediment, nutrients and bacteria) become very difficult and costly for property owners and communities to fix.

How will the updated stormwater standards help reduce these problems?

In decades past, local stormwater management was designed without regard to the cumulative impact of runoff on downstream properties and streams. To address this and the future increase in population and development across Chester County's watersheds, updated stormwater management ordinance standards were necessary to meet state and federal requirements. The updated standards require new development and redevelopment projects (large and small) to be constructed in a way that maintains or reduces the amount of stormwater that leaves the site; this will help reduce the cumulative impacts of flooding and erosion on downgradient properties and streams. It will also help keep our waters clean that serve as a critical source of public drinking water.

The best approach to minimize flooding and improve water quality is to allow rain to be absorbed close to where it falls – reducing stormwater runoff.

How can stormwater runoff be minimized for a small project?

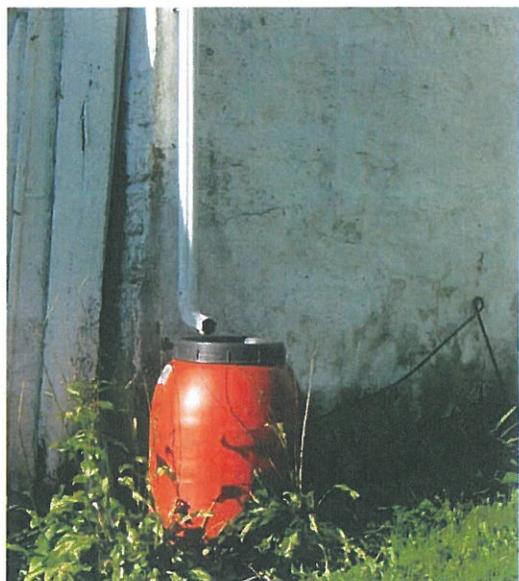
The first step is to discuss your planned project with your municipal engineer or zoning officer to determine what requirements apply to your project. Then, design your small project with the least amount of impervious surface and the minimum amount of area to be disturbed (or compacted during construction). The third step is to mimic nature by allowing the rain to be absorbed close to where it falls. This is accomplished by installing one or more stormwater best management practices (BMPs) that will capture and absorb the stormwater generated by the proposed project, and minimize any increase in the amount of stormwater runoff flowing off of the property.

What stormwater BMPs can be used for small projects?

Examples of BMPs that are generally suitable for small projects can include features such as infiltration trenches, an attractive rain garden, permeable pavers for patio installations, rain barrels or a cistern, or a rainwater infiltration border along a driveway planted with attractive wildflowers. More than one of these BMPs may be used in combination to address other more significant drainage or stormwater problems on the property.



This rain garden helps absorb more stormwater than the mowed lawn that surrounds it. (photo credit – Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association)



Rain barrels capture roof runoff. With a soaker hose attached, this BMP can also help your garden survive drier periods.

How should a stormwater BMP be chosen?

Before choosing a BMP, consult with your municipality, as they may prefer one type of BMP or not allow a particular BMP. Homeowners will need to understand the function of the chosen BMP and homeowners will be responsible for completing ongoing inspections and maintenance. Just as a house requires routine inspection and upkeep, so too will your chosen BMP(s). Without proper maintenance these BMPs will not function effectively, or they may stop functioning. A BMP can be costly to repair and its failure will contribute to downstream flooding, erosion and pollution.

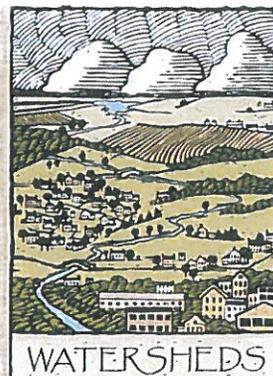
Where can I learn more about stormwater BMPs for homeowner projects?

The first step is to speak with your municipality to better understand all requirements and limitations regarding small projects. The internet has many excellent resources. A collection of some of these helpful resources and links can be found on the following webpage: www.chesco.org/water/stormwater_management.

Chester County Board of Commissioners

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COUNTY OF CHESTER ASSESSMENT OFFICE

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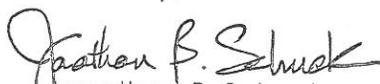
Dear Property Owner:

As you have applied for a building permit from your municipality, the county Assessment Office would like to advise you of the steps surrounding our involvement in the process. We would like to make sure that you are aware of what will take place during construction and after the improvement is finished.

- 1) The municipality is required to supply a list of all building and zoning permits to the Assessment Office monthly.
- 2) An assessor will visit your property when they are in your municipality (generally rotate through every 2 – 3 months).
- 3) When arriving at your property, the assessor will come to the front door and identify themselves wearing a Chester County I. D. badge and will present a business card. They will ask you questions about the building permit and may need to measure the improvements (from the outside).
- 4) If you are not home when the assessor arrives, a business card will be left with a note on the flip side of the card. The assessor will proceed to the improvement and measure if the work is sufficiently complete. Otherwise they will mark it for a revisit the next time they are in the municipality.
- 5) Please cooperate with the assessor, as he or she is simply trying to get the correct information about your improvement, so there will be no mistakes on the county record.
- 6) After the construction is finished or 30 months has elapsed your improvement will be assessed and added to your property record card.
- 7) You will receive a notice from our office changing your assessment reflecting the addition of the new improvement. If you require more information please call our office at 610-344-6105 and ask to speak to the assessor assigned to your municipality.

It is the intention of this letter to inform you of the assessment process so that you realize that we will be visiting your property. Please note that due to time constraints we generally **do not make appointments**, unless absolutely necessary. Please be patient when an assessor knocks on your door and answer any questions to the best of your ability. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Sincerely,


Jonathan B. Schuck
Acting Director


Joseph A. Finnaren, C. P. E.
Chief Assessor

Taxing Authority-please run additional copies of this letter when your supply runs low.

CHILDPROOF YOUR HOME IMPROVEMENTS.

HAVING WORK DONE ON YOUR PLACE?
USE A LEAD-SAFE CERTIFIED CONTRACTOR.

The Danger

Lead paint hazards have not gone away. If your home or apartment was built before 1978, unqualified workers could spread lead paint dust. Even doing a small job.

- **Kids:** Lead exposure can cause lower intelligence, behavior problems and learning disabilities.
- **Pregnant women:** Lead paint dust can be harmful to your developing fetus.
- **All adults:** Exposure to lead paint dust can cause nervous system effects, high blood pressure, fertility problems, and even kidney effects.

The Renovate Repair and Painting Rule

The EPA is requiring that contractors be Lead-Safe Certified.

- Contractors include: renovators, electricians, HVAC specialists, plumbers, painters and maintenance staff who disrupt more than six square feet of lead paint.
- This rule also covers schools, day care centers, or any buildings where children gather.

CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION

The Solution

Protect your family and loved ones.

- Make sure to hire a contractor who is Lead-Safe Certified. It may cost just a little more but you'll get the job done right.

WARNING
LEAD WORK AREA
POISON
NO SMOKING
OR EATING



To find a contractor who is Lead-Safe Certified near you,
visit epa.gov/getleadsafe or call 800-424-LEAD.



Safe digging is
no accident!

Know what's
below.

Dial 8-1-1
before you dig.



TEMPORARY MARKING GUIDELINES

	WHITE	Proposed Excavation
	PINK	Temporary Survey Markings
	RED	Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit and Lighting Cables
	YELLOW	Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum or Gaseous Materials
	ORANGE	Communication, Alarm or Signal Lines, Cables or Conduit and Traffic Loops
	BLUE	Potable Water
	PURPLE	Reclaimed Water, Irrigation and Slurry Lines
	GREEN	Sewers and Drain Lines

The following information is needed when you call
PA One Call System.

YOUR TELEPHONE NUMBER

YOUR MAILING ADDRESS

COUNTY - The name of the county where the work will
take place

MUNICIPALITY - City, Township or Borough where the
work will take place

THE ADDRESS WHERE THE WORK WILL TAKE PLACE

THE NEAREST INTERSECTING STREET TO THE WORKSITE
THE NAME OF A SECOND INTERSECTION NEAR THE
WORK SITE

IS THE PROPOSED EXCAVATION AREA (WORK SITE)
MARKED IN WHITE - Yes or No

OTHER INFORMATION THAT WOULD HELP THE
LOCATOR FIND THE SITE - Clarifying information to
specify the exact location of the dig

THE TYPE OF WORK BEING DONE

WHETHER THE WORK WILL TAKE PLACE IN: Street,
Sidewalk, Public or Private Property

THE APPROXIMATE DEPTH YOU ARE DIGGING

THE EXTENT OF THE EXCAVATION - The approximate
size of the opening; the length and width or diameter

THE METHOD OF EXCAVATION - How will the earth be
moved

WHO IS THE WORK BEING DONE FOR
PERSON TO CONTACT IF THE UTILITIES HAVE
QUESTIONS

THE CONTACT PERSON'S PHONE NUMBER - The
phone number with area code for daytime contact

THE BEST TIME TO CALL

FAX NUMBER AND/OR EMAIL ADDRESS - The
responses from the facility owners will be sent to you

SCHEDULED EXCAVATION DATE AND START TIME -
not less than 3 business days or more than 10
business days.

DURATION OF A JOB - How long will the job take

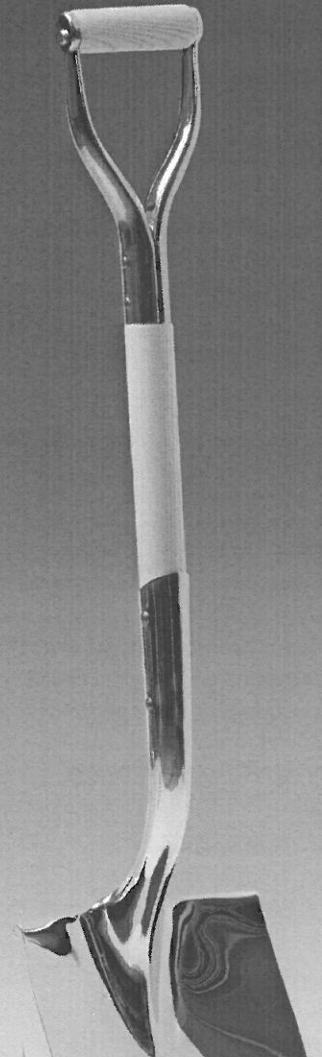
ANY ADDITIONAL REMARKS YOU MAY HAVE

You will be given a 10 digit serial number as
confirmation of your call and our system will send
you the responses from the utilities on the morning of
your scheduled excavation date via fax or email

Know what's below.
Dial 8-1-1 before you dig.



www.pa811.org



What do we do?

We are the "Call before you dig!" company for all of Pennsylvania. If you plan to disturb the earth with powered equipment, you are required by Pennsylvania law to notify the underground utility companies of your intent to do so. Notification occurs by calling 8-1-1 or 1-800-242-1776, 24 hours of the day, every day of the year.

We will then notify the utility companies nearby of your intent to dig. The utility companies are responsible to mark where their underground lines are located with colored flags, paint or chalk.

Please Note:

- PA One Call does not mark utility lines.
- In some cases, the utility company may not mark the service lines you own.

Why should you call?

Safe digging is no accident! If you are installing a fence or deck, or digging for a mailbox post, patio or other excavation project, it is important to Know What's Below. Dial 8-1-1 or 1-800-242-1776 before you dig. The utility companies do not want an accident, either. The best way to learn where underground utility lines are located is to call before you dig.

For more information, visit www.pa811.org



Homeowner Quick Tips

- One easy phone call to 8-1-1 three to ten business days before digging begins helps keep your neighborhood safe.
- Call on Monday or Tuesday if you plan to dig on Saturday or Sunday.
- The utility companies will mark where their underground lines are located with colored paint, flags or chalk.
- Do not remove the flags if you see them in your yard.
- Our service is no cost to homeowners.
- Did you hire someone to install your fence, deck or new patio? Ask to see the **PA One Call** serial number before allowing them to dig on your property.

The Excavator's Responsibility

- Dial 8-1-1 or 1-800-242-1776.
- Do not allow anyone to excavate on your property without calling.
- Always look for the markings on the ground before your dig date.
- If you do not see markings, do not allow anyone to dig. Wait for the lines to be marked by the utility.
- Whoever places the call will receive an email or fax with a list of facility owners who have marked or have not marked. Pay attention to this message.
- Respect the markings by not removing flags or disturbing the actual markings.
- Exercise care around the marked lines by hand digging.
- When the project is complete, the excavator should remove the flags or marks from the ground or pavement.
- Report mishaps by dialing 8-1-1. Report emergencies by dialing 9-1-1.