



Town of Westford

Stormwater Management Program

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

SPRING 2017

What is stormwater?

Stormwater is rainfall and snowmelt that flows across land and “impervious surfaces,” such as roads, parking lots, and rooftops. It collects pollutants and debris, like trash, pet waste, fertilizers, and car oil and antifreeze, and runs into the Town’s storm drains and catch basins. Stormwater is then discharged, untreated, into our waters leading to poor water quality, algae blooms, and harm to wildlife. It also causes flooding in streets and homes. Stormwater directly impacts the local waterbodies that we value for their beauty, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitats, as well as our drinking water sources.



Clean water begins with YOU.

What is Westford’s Stormwater Management Master Plan (SWMMP)?

The SWMMP evaluates Westford’s current stormwater management practices and identifies future needs for a sustainable stormwater program. It presents a pragmatic, cost-effective approach to addressing drainage infrastructure needs while considering local, state, and federal water quality initiatives to protect our valuable water resources now and for future generations.

Why is the Plan necessary?

Stormwater management and drainage infrastructure are often overlooked and under-funded. The Plan will allow us to invest wisely and strategically in both our infrastructure and natural resources. The Plan will help Westford to meet the ever-increasing demands on vital local water resources for drinking water, industry, recreation, and wildlife and aquatic habitat by taking steps to capture more clean rainfall and snowmelt, prevent stormwater pollution, and return water to our groundwater, streams, lakes, and wetlands.

How will it benefit Westford and me?

The overall goal of the Plan is to prepare a well thought out strategy for the long-term preservation of our quality of life and environmental resources relative to stormwater. The SWMMP will provide the necessary guidance for Westford to realize the following benefits:

- 💧 preserve water quality for recreation and habitat,
- 💧 provide sustainable, high quality drinking water sources for residents and businesses,
- 💧 protect and preserve public health and property, and
- 💧 meet local, state, and federal goals for clean, safe waterbodies and groundwater.

What can I do to help manage stormwater?

You can help protect our waters by:

- 💧 Keeping trash, chemicals, and debris off the ground and out of storm drains.
- 💧 Using lawn care methods that are sensitive to the environment.
- 💧 Disposing of pet waste in the proper receptacles.
- 💧 Washing vehicles at a car wash or on an unpaved surface.
- 💧 Continuing to support the Town's efforts to protect our resources through the stormwater management program.

What are the associated costs?

The Plan looks at all the current and future financial needs for Westford's stormwater program, so the Town can devise a strategy to maintain and improve the program within its budget. An important aspect of the SWMMP is evaluating long-term funding methods that are fair to both residents and businesses and institutions in Westford.



Who is developing the Plan?

Westford's Engineering Department is developing the Plan with guidance from the Town's consultant, Tighe & Bond, and the Stormwater Advisory Group. The Engineering Department is also working closely with the Highway Department, the Board of Selectmen, the Water Department, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to achieve its goals.

What is the timeline for the Plan?

The final Plan will be presented to the Selectmen in spring 2017. If they accept the Plan, the Engineering Department and the Board of Selectmen will work together to begin implementing the recommendations.

Where can I find more information and how can I be involved in the Plan?

To learn more about the Plan, visit the Engineering Department's Stormwater Management webpage at www.westfordma.gov/stormwater. For questions or comments, please email Paul Starratt, Town Engineer, at pstarratt@westfordma.gov or call 978-360-0498.

To be involved, attend a public meeting on the Plan, spread the word about it, and contact us with your comments. You can sign up for automatic notifications of upcoming public meetings by selecting "Stormwater Management Master Plan" at the Town's Agenda Center website at www.westfordma.gov/subscriber.