Town/Village of Harrison
Stormwater Management Quarterly – Volume 8

Why all the fuss about stormwater?

Stormwater is water from rain or melting snow that "runs off" across land instead of seeping into the ground. This runoff usually flows into the nearest stream, creek, river, lake or ocean. The runoff is not treated in any way, thereby polluting our waterways and affecting everything from wildlife to native plants.

The federal Clean Water Act requires towns to take necessary steps to reduce stormwater runoff. Towns are required to do the following:

1. Conduct outreach and education about stormwater runoff.
2. Provide opportunities for residents to participate in conversations and activities related to reducing polluted stormwater runoff.
3. Detect illicit discharges.
4. Control construction site runoff.
5. Control post-construction site runoff.
6. Perform municipal housekeeping to take steps to prevent runoff from town buildings and activities.

But the responsibility doesn't stop with the Town. We all have a responsibility to understand how our everyday activities affect stormwater and stormwater quality.

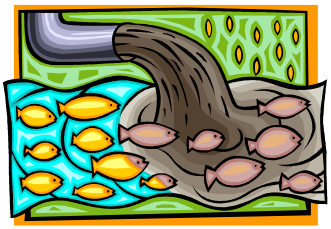
When contemplating a project that involves any type of land development, whether building an addition on your home, installing an in-ground swimming pool or removing a deck and replacing it with a patio, it is important to consider ways to manage the flow and quality of stormwater.

Below please find some commonly used words and phrases that are often used in reference to stormwater and stormwater management. It is our hope that a greater understanding of the terminology will lead to a great understanding of stormwater issues.

What is…..

Land Development –
the altering of the landscape, including, but not limited to: changing landforms from a natural or semi-natural state for a purpose such as agriculture or housing; subdividing real estate into lots for the purpose of building homes; developing property or changing its use

Best Management Practice –
a term used to describe the different ways to keep pollutants out of runoff and to slow down high volumes of runoff. Keeping pollutants from entering runoff, practicing erosion control measures, use of detention ponds to collect runoff and pervious paving are examples of a few "best management practices".



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Water Pollution –
the contamination of water bodies. Water pollution occurs when pollutants are discharged directly or indirectly into waterways without adequate treatment to remove harmful compounds.

Sediment and Erosion Control –
a practice or device designed to keep eroded soil on a construction site, so that it does not wash off and cause water pollution to a nearby waterway. Sediment controls are usually employed together with erosion controls, which are designed to prevent or minimize erosion and thus reduce the need for sediment controls.

Detention/Retention Basin –
a stormwater management facility installed on, or adjacent to, tributaries of rivers, streams, lakes or bays that is designed to protect against flooding and, in some cases, downstream erosion by storing water for a limited period of time.

Pervious Pavement –
a special type of pavement with a high porosity used for applications that allows water from precipitation and other sources to pass directly through, thereby reducing the runoff from the site and allowing groundwater to recharge (infiltration).

Groundwater Recharge/Infiltration–
a hydrologic process where water moves downward from surface water to ground water and enters the soil.

Low Impact Development (LID) –
a term used to describe a land planning and engineering design approach to managing stormwater runoff. LID emphasizes conservation and use of on-site natural features to protect water quality.

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