

The Marion County storm water drainage system is more than 10,000 miles long, with 6,000 miles on private property and must be maintained by property owners. The remaining 4,000 miles of the storm water drainage system are the responsibility of the City.

By keeping our storm water drainage systems in good condition, we can:

- Prevent potholes and poor road surfaces
- Avoid traffic hazards by removing standing water and black ice patches
- Keep septic systems functioning
- Remove insect breeding grounds
- Divert storm water away from your home

## ★ GREEN WAYS TO MANAGE STORM WATER

- Plant a rain garden, a landscaped area planted with wild flowers and other native vegetation that soak up rain water, mainly from the roof of a house or other building. If you are interested in learning about the City's Rain Garden Program, visit [www.Indy.gov/SustainIndy](http://www.Indy.gov/SustainIndy) or send an email to [raingarden@indy.gov](mailto:raingarden@indy.gov).
- Use a rain barrel to collect storm water runoff from rooftops for later use on your lawn, garden and potted plants.
- Create a stream side buffer zone; a naturalized area along the stream bank that protects it from pollution and erosion. A naturalized area is created by establishing a "no mow" area (30 feet or wider) and planting trees, shrubs and long stem grasses.

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RebuildIndy is Mayor Ballard's initiative to transform the city through infrastructure improvements such as:

- Restoring deteriorating thoroughfares, residential streets, sidewalks and bridges
- Addressing neighborhood drainage and flooding issues
- Demolishing unsalvageable abandoned homes
- Creating local jobs
- Increasing public safety for neighborhoods and residents

For more information, please visit:  
[www.indy.gov/RebuildIndy](http://www.indy.gov/RebuildIndy)



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# STORM WATER DRAINAGE RESPONSIBILITIES



**Gregory A. Ballard**  
Mayor of Indianapolis

## CITY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Maintains storm water master plan for Marion County watershed drainage improvements
- Designs and constructs flood control and storm water drainage improvement projects
- Maintains cross pipes under city streets
- Removes log jams from major streams on public property
- Establishes and maintains 50 miles of flood protection levees
- Inspects private property and ditches for compliance with environmental public nuisances ordinance
- Reviews, inspects and issues permits for development and land alteration plans in compliance with the storm water management and sediment control ordinance
- Administers the storm water utility program



## PROPERTY OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Work with neighbors to clear brush, debris and other blockages from neighborhood creeks and ditches
- Maintain swales and ditches, including roadside ditches, by mowing grass to eight inches or less and keeping them free of debris. Be sure not to mow when the ground is wet to avoid rutting
- Keep storm inlet grates, driveway culverts and cross pipes in good repair and clear of debris, trash and leaves
- Use approved rock or concrete for erosion control for creeks that run through private property. To ensure the specific type of rock or concrete is permissible in waterways, be sure to check with the Department of Code Enforcement at (317) 327-8700
- Call Citizens Water, (317) 924-3311, to report flooding on city streets and sidewalks or illegal dumping in waterways

## WHAT IS THE LAW?

The City has no authority to correct storm water drainage problems that are on private property. If the drainage issue is occurring on private property and is not a result of failure of the City infrastructure, the property owner is responsible for the repairs.

There are two main ordinances related to storm water drainage and flood control in the Revised Code of the Consolidated City and County:

- **Environmental Public Nuisances** gives the Indianapolis Department of Public Works the right to inspect private property to investigate an environmental public nuisance complaint. (Chapter 575)
- **Drainage and Sediment Control** defines how and by whom drainage facilities must be maintained. (Chapter 561)

If you are having drainage and erosion problems on your private property, the Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District (MCSWCD) can assist you by:

- Investigating the site and conducting surveys
- Reviewing soil surveys, infrastructure maps and other information
- Providing recommendations, as needed

To learn more about the information and services the MCSWCD offers, visit [www.marionswcd.org](http://www.marionswcd.org) or call (317) 786-1776 or e-mail [marilyn-hughes@iaswcd.org](mailto:marilyn-hughes@iaswcd.org).