



So what can we do to improve the effects of stormwater?

There are simple things we can all do to help improve stormwater quality. It does not take large or costly projects to make a difference. In fact, **small, inexpensive practices** can add up to a great deal of improvement. We will describe five practices that are effective and easy for homeowners to install.

These five practices treat stormwater on your property before it enters the street system and also after it reaches the street system but before it reaches a stormwater drain on the street. Once stormwater reaches a street's stormwater drain the opportunity to improve its quality is lost because it flows directly into the Kinni without any treatment. Therefore, treating stormwater as close to its source as possible reduces treatment cost and improves the effectiveness of the practices.

The list of stormwater treatment practices includes rain barrels, roof gutters and downspout disconnects, rain gardens, infiltration swales, and pervious pavers.

These five practices work well on their own and even more effectively when used in combinations. It is possible to modify each practice to fit your needs and desires. Each is unique but they all are designed for a very important and sound premise:

To allow as much stormwater to soak into the ground, as near to its source as possible, in order to keep it from flowing untreated into the Kinnickinnic River.

1 Photo courtesy of the City of Superior
2,3 Photos courtesy of the Center for Watershed Protection
4,5 Photos courtesy of Emmons and Olivier Resources, Inc.
6,7 Photos courtesy of Emmons and Olivier Resources, Inc.

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Rewriting the Story of Stormwater on Your Property

Improving the Kinnickinnic River with Neighborhood "Best Management Practices"

What is stormwater and why is it important?

As rain falls to the ground it becomes known as stormwater. Stormwater that falls on pervious surfaces (grass, fields, natural areas, etc.) soaks into the ground without running off into streams and lakes. Stormwater that falls on impervious surfaces (roofs, driveways, roads, sidewalks, etc.) is not allowed to soak into the ground and runs off into streams and lakes. This runoff has negative effects on the river or lake system including: increased flooding frequency and amount, decreased water clarity, stress on insects and fish, thermal pollution, depletion of drinking water supplies, and many others.

#1 Rain Barrels

Rain barrels are attached to downspouts which collect stormwater running off your roof. An overflow system allows excess water to be directed elsewhere. The rainwater collected in the barrel can be used for watering your plants or garden during dry times of the year and even to wash your car.



1

#2 Roof Gutters and Downspout Disconnects

Roof gutters and downspout disconnects redirect roof downspouts onto your yard where it can soak into the soil rather than onto an impervious driveway or sidewalk which likely directs the rainwater into the street. This “disconnects” or stops the flow of stormwater from one impervious surface to another. This keeps your roof’s stormwater from entering into the street system where it would drain to the Kinni.

Connected



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Disconnected



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There are simple things we can all do to help...

#3 Rain Gardens



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Rain gardens are shallow depressions, planted with different types of flowers, grasses or shrubs, that collect stormwater and allow it to soak into the ground. They can be located in various places on a property to treat different sources of stormwater. They can be placed at the end of a roof downspout to collect roof water, at the downhill end of a sloping yard, or in a boulevard with a cut-away section of street curb to allow water running down the street to flow into the rain garden.

#4 Infiltration Swales

Infiltration swales are depressions that consist of an underground system of rock and gravel allowing stormwater to soak into the ground. They are typically designed for use in boulevards. Their design makes them effective at treating a great deal of stormwater.



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#5 Pervious Pavers

Pervious pavers are interlocking paving stones with a hole where they join each other that allows stormwater to flow through the pavers into a layer of gravel and then into the soil below it. These have been used on parking lots, sidewalks, and driveways.



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7