

Bioswale

WHAT DOES THAT EVEN MEAN?

A BIOSWALE IS A SHALLOW DITCH WITH GENTLY SLOPING SIDES AND VARIOUS LAYERS OF SOILS BENEATH.

A bioswale – sometimes called a vegetated ditch – slows stormwater runoff and directs it to an area where it can soak in. It achieves the same goal as a rain garden, but is usually designed to manage a larger amount of runoff. A bioswale often uses grass and plants to stabilize the soil, reduce erosion, slow the flow, and absorb runoff.



HOW ARE BIOSWALES HELPFUL?

- Bioswales help filter out harmful pollutants like oil, fertilizer, pesticides, soap, and animal waste before they are carried to the storm system and into our streams.
- They help reduce flooding by capturing the rainwater that would otherwise pool up on ground surfaces.



CARING FOR YOUR BIOSWALE

Grass: Keep the bioswale's grass thick, healthy, and mowed to three or four inches. Don't leave grass clippings in the bioswale.

Sunlight: If your bioswale's grass has bare spots, it may not be getting enough sunlight. Do some pruning and tree trimming to let the sunlight through.

Standing water: The bioswale needs to drain freely between storms. Standing water can kill the grass and other plants.

Water flow: Keep the water flowing evenly over the entire width of the bioswale.

Pollution: Keep trash and other contaminants like oil, gas, and paint far away from the bioswale.

LEARN MORE

Visit bothellwa.gov/bioswales for more information about caring for your bioswale.

Learn other ways to help keep Puget Sound healthy at pugetsoundstartshere.org.

