

Storm Water Responsibilities - Property Owner and the Town

- WHAT IS STORMWATER RUNOFF?

During rain events, impervious surfaces such as rooftops, driveways, parking lots, and roads prevent water from being absorbed into the ground. When a rainfall event occurs, the portion of water that is not absorbed into the ground becomes what is known as "storm water runoff". All properties contribute to storm water runoff and property owners are responsible for storm drainage flowing through their property.

- MAINTENANCE OF DITCH AREAS

To allow for proper function of the overall system, the Town maintains the public ditch system along Town roadways. The Town does not maintain drainage utility easements located on private property. However, the Town may enter private property located within a dedicated drainage easement to remove an obstruction or otherwise repair or rehab the ditch system. While the Town takes proactive measures to mitigate drainage issues and concerns throughout the Town, flooding of both property and homes, can, and will occur during times of heavy rains.

- PRIVATE DRAINAGE & EROSION ISSUES

Private drainage and erosion issues, as well as ground water issues (i.e. natural springs) are the responsibility of the property owner. The Town is not responsible for ensuring proper drainage on privately owned property. In general, the property owner has the duty to maintain the easement; this includes public drainage utility easements located on private property. Property owners are responsible for maintaining drainage easements located on their property in a neat and clean manner. This may include routine grounds keeping, such as grass mowing and removal of trash, vegetation, and debris. Owners should ensure that drainage ditches and structures are kept free of yard waste (grass clippings, tree trimmings, fallen limbs, and leaves) or other obstructions (fencing or retaining walls) that may block the flow of water. Driveways and their associated culverts are also the property owner responsibilities.

Vegetative growth (trees and shrubs), driveways, and their associated culverts, may be permitted or allowed in easements as long as they do not block the flow of storm drainage. Drainage to neighboring properties is a civil matter between the property owners. Moreover, owners that place obstructions, or fail to maintain property within public drainage easements may be subject to civil action from adjacent property owners and may be subject to a notice of violation as determined by the Town. While the Town may propose or recommend possible solutions, the Town cannot design or otherwise engineer improvements on private property. Additionally, the Town cannot recommend a particular contractor or undertake any work outside a dedicated Town easement.

- HOW YOU CAN HELP

Keep easements free of litter and debris. Do not rake, blow, or dump grass clippings or leaves into the ditches. Keep the area easily accessible in case repairs or maintenance are necessary. Remember that rain water naturally runs downhill, so when you are creating landscape ditches, please keep this in mind. Be a "good neighbor" and work with your adjoining property owners to avoid any excessive runoff or damage. Help to keep our pristine mountain beautiful!