

# STORMWATER RUNOFF & SURFACE DRAINAGE



When we experience heavy rains, stormwater from one property may flow into another as the ground becomes saturated. This is known as lot-to-lot drainage, and it's influenced by natural topography, property grading and impervious surfaces, such as roofs and pavement.

This informational sheet offers answers to frequently asked questions regarding lot-to-lot drainage. Please be aware that Clean Water Services does not maintain private drainage systems or have the authority to intervene in private lot-to-lot drainage disputes, but we are here to offer answers to questions about the issue.

## **What is the difference between public and private drainage systems?**

A public drainage system typically serves more than one property and is located in the right of way, in an easement dedicated to Clean Water Services, or within the city limits of a CWS Member City. For example, stormdrain grates in the street are public systems maintained by CWS, while drainage systems on individual properties, such as French drains or rain gardens, are the property owner's responsibility to maintain.

## **Can a property owner install a drainage system?**

Yes, property owners may install a private drainage system or access a public one with approval from the appropriate party. Private drainage systems require approval from Washington County Building Services. Public drainage improvements or connections to the public system require Clean Water Services approval. To get started, explore the Permits & Development section of our website.

## **Do new building projects require drainage systems?**

Yes, each new development is required to install a drainage system, which must adhere to the Clean Water Services Design & Construction Standards and other local regulations.

## **Who do I contact with additional drainage questions?**

Clean Water Services is a special service district that manages the public drainage system and is responsible for ensuring that new development meets public standards. Washington County and individual cities authorize Land Use Approvals, including building and grading on properties. They are also responsible for the public streets and roadside drainage systems along them.



## **These Member Cities manage drainage systems within their city limits:**

- Beaverton
- Cornelius
- Forest Grove
- Hillsboro
- Sherwood
- Tigard
- Tualatin

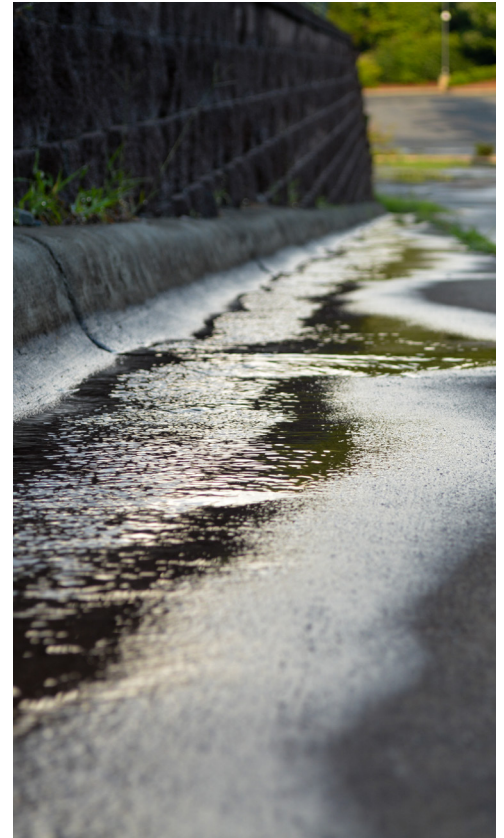


# STORMWATER RUNOFF & SURFACE WATER FAQ



## Resources

- Review the Design & Construction Standards: [cleanwaterservices.org/dnc](http://cleanwaterservices.org/dnc)
- Call Before You Dig: [digsafelyoregon.com](http://digsafelyoregon.com)
- Be a Clean Water Hero: [cleanwaterservices.org/hero](http://cleanwaterservices.org/hero)



## What do I need to know about soil disturbance and erosion on my property?

The Clean Water Services Design & Construction Standards prohibit soil or sediment-laden water to be carried from one property to another, or into the surface water or drainage system. Please contact Clean Water Services if you are considering a construction project that involves digging, or are concerned about the movement of soil or sediment from one property to another for another reason.

Clean Water Services encourages property owners to work together to manage localized drainage issues. If you have a drainage problem that Clean Water Services, your city or Washington County does not have the authority to resolve, we recommend consulting an attorney knowledgeable in drainage law.

## Are there additional solutions to reduce lot-to-lot runoff?

Natural home and yard care methods offer easy, affordable solutions that generally require less work on your part. Your property might benefit from a private water quality facility, for example. Low Impact Development Approaches (LIDAs) can maximize a site's potential by reducing or incorporating the area needed for stormwater management and water quality treatment while protecting natural resources and habitat.

Our Clean Water Hero Assistance program offers free technical assistance to help you create your own water-friendly landscape. Property owners within our service area may receive free native plants as part of our Streamside Stewardship Program. Explore how you can protect our streams with stream-friendly solutions on our website.

Everything we do at Clean Water Services aims to protect public health while enhancing the natural environment of the Tualatin River Watershed.

  
**Clean Water Services**

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