



## Swale Maintenance

Tropical storms, hurricanes and an overall active rainy season can create flooding in many areas of South Florida. Stormwater management is particularly challenging during this time of year and the need to minimize flooding, conserve water and reduce pollution increases.

One of the major contributors to good stormwater management is a properly designed and functioning swale. A swale is a long narrow depression, which varies in depth from six inches to a few feet and is typically wider than it is deep. Often, they are located in the public right of way, between the sidewalk and the edge of the road.

Swales are designed to provide water quality treatment that will reduce pollution as well as control flooding during storm events. They collect rainwater, filter pollutants, control flooding, prevent erosion, and provide a drainage area for stormwater.

In order for swales to function as designed, maintenance is essential. Swales that have been filled with debris will hamper the movement/conveyance of stormwater and may cause flooding. However, swales that have been maintained will provide storage, filtration and conveyance of stormwater for a cleaner, safer and more efficient stormwater management system.

A properly maintained swale helps prevent stormwater pollution and flooding. The following information will assist you with ensuring your swale area manages stormwater runoff efficiently:

- Mow and maintain swale areas to promote healthy grass growth.
- Minimize the use of lawn and garden chemicals.
- Avoid over watering the swale area. If water is standing in the swale when it has not rained, reduce irrigation.
- Keep swales free of litter, branches, leaves and limbs so water can soak into the ground.
- Avoid parking cars on swales. This compacts the soil and prevents stormwater from soaking into the ground.
- Swales located in or partially in the City of Fort Lauderdale's Right of Way may not be altered by regrading or filling with concrete, rock, dirt, landscaping, trees or anything other than grass unless a City permit has been obtained. \*

Altering a swale may disrupt its natural drainage features, causing flooding and stormwater pollution.

*\*As per Section 25-100 of the Code of Ordinances, property owners that propose changes to the swale area, other than planting grass, are required to obtain a City engineering permit. If unauthorized changes are made, owners may be required to restore the swale to its original state. For more information call 954-828-8000.*



## **Save Our Swale Program:**

The Public Works Department proactively installs swales at homeowners' addresses. Swales are installed and maintained in accordance with the City of Fort Lauderdale ordinances No. 18-12, 26-145, 47-20-13, and 47-21-14. The installation of swales enhances stormwater drainage and recharge of the surficial aquifer.

Swales are completed only once per residence and only after a swale agreement has been signed by the homeowner. Maintenance of the swale is required by the resident. Re-swaling by the City is not practiced due to lack of homeowner maintenance.

If you would like to apply for the Swale program, please complete the attached application.



### Swale Agreement

I \_\_\_\_\_, the property owner of \_\_\_\_\_, hereby  
Print Name Street Address  
grant the City of Fort Lauderdale, and any contractor acting as its agent, temporary access to my property for the purpose of performing a swale reclamation project on City right of way. I understand that if the City decides to proceed with this project, there will be no cost to me, the property owner.

If an irrigation system has been or will be installed, the City will plant St. Augustine sod in the swale area, or its equivalent. If irrigation is not available, the City will plant Bahia sod in the swale area, or its equivalent.

By initialing below, you have read, understand, and agree to the following: Initial Here:

- I understand that my swale must be at least six (6) feet wide. \_\_\_\_\_
- I understand that Sec. 18-12 City Code of Ordinances requires the property owner to maintain the swale area. \_\_\_\_\_
- I understand that I cannot have an open Code Enforcement violation for swale maintenance. \_\_\_\_\_
- I understand that this is NOT a sod program to beautify the home but instead it is a program to improve water quality with a side benefit of alleviating potential flooding issues within my neighborhood. \_\_\_\_\_
- I agree to water and maintain the newly installed sod. \_\_\_\_\_
- I agree to minimize parking in the swale area, to the greatest extent possible, so it can properly drain stormwater and function as designed, which will help reduce flooding. \_\_\_\_\_
- I agree to notify my tenant(s) about the swale reclamation project prior to the start of construction (if applicable). \_\_\_\_\_
- I understand a start date cannot be provided due to scheduling and workloads. \_\_\_\_\_
- By signing, I hereby hold harmless the City and its agents for any work completed arising out of or relating to this Swale Agreement. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Homeowners Association Name or neighborhood



Do you have an irrigation (sprinkler) system?  
If no, will a system be installed in the future?

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and **fax** it to 954-828-6245, **mail** it to, Stormwater, Public Works Department, City of Fort Lauderdale, 101 NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Suite 1410, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301, or **email** it to StormWater@fortlauderdale.gov. You may call 954-828-8000 with any further inquiries.

Thank you for helping the City improve flood protection and water quality in your neighborhood!