

Stormwater



Stormwater is the rainwater that runs off the hard surfaces of your house or property. These hard surfaces include your roof, driveway and paved areas or paths.

Stormwater is generally an under-valued resource.

Most houses and stormwater systems are designed to carry rainwater away as quickly as possible.

This can harm the local creek, by directing too much water to the stream over too short a period of time.

By retaining and treating the stormwater on your property, you have access to a valuable resource (water) and you can help prevent damage to your local creeks and rivers.



Retaining Stormwater



Rainwater tanks are the easiest method of retaining stormwater for use in your home.

Rainwater tanks provide an additional source of water for non-drinking uses (e.g. garden watering, clothes washing, toilet flushing), that is not billed and not subject to water restrictions.

They also benefit the broader community by reducing demand on drinking water supplies.

And most importantly, they can play a significant role in stormwater management and protecting local creeks.

Rainwater tanks work best for creek health if the water retained is used frequently - to allow room for the next rainfall and if they capture most of the roof surface. Use of the water for toilet flushing or in hot water systems can really boost a tank's efficiency, and reduce stormwater impacts on creeks.

Urban stormwater runoff is a rare gift: the one source of water that if we harvest, we help protect the environment.

Treating Stormwater



Raingardens and infiltration systems are a very effective ways of treating your stormwater, to improve the quality of water leaving your home.

Raingardens are landscaping features that hold back and filter stormwater. Rainwater from roofs and paved areas can be directed to a raingarden where loose deep soils absorb water and filter pollutants.

Raingardens provide an attractive self-watering garden that can complement any style of landscaping, and the water that filters through them or is taken up by plants means cleaner water entering into the creek. Infiltration systems can allow water to infiltrate into the soils around your lawn, for example, helping to keep your grass green even through summer.

Like rainwater tanks, raingardens play an important role in stormwater management and the protection of local creeks





How can stormwater damage your local creek?



Water running off urban areas is very different than rural or forested areas.

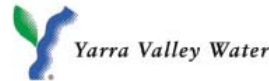
- Urban stormwater enters creeks as a 'flush' of water, over a very short time.
- In urban areas, these flushes contain a much larger volume of water, up to 10 times more than forested areas.
- In urban areas, the flushes of water are more frequent. In forests rainwater usually soaks into the ground and is taken up by plants.
- In urban areas, the water entering the creek is more polluted.

So, the changes to the creek's water flow patterns (more polluted water, more often) results in:

- An increase in creek channel erosion
- Disturbance to in-stream habitat and loss of sensitive species of plants and animals
- An increase in sediment loads
- Greater likelihood of flooding



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Smarter Stormwater.

Managing urban stormwater to protect local creeks

