

Native Landscaping at Stormwater Sites

General

The City of Appleton Department of Public Works manages stormwater for flood control and water quality at over 80 ponds and biofilters throughout the City. Where practical, native plant communities are established at these sites to help meet the following goals:

- Decrease runoff via deep root systems for improved flood control
- Nutrient uptake via root systems for improved water quality
- Reduce surface erosion via ground cover for improved water quality
- Provide biodiversity to improve habitat for small vertebrates, pollinators, and other invertebrate species
- Provide biodiverse aesthetics through native grasses, wildflowers, emergent plants, sedges, trees, shrubs and other appropriate species
- Provide cost-effective solutions for long-term maintenance via plants that are drought resistant, self-sustaining, with no fertilizer needs.
- Crowd out non-native invasive species and other weeds.

Vegetation Management

The City actively manages vegetation at stormwater sites to improve the health of desirable species and to reduce or eliminate the occurrence of invasive species. Each facility is evaluated throughout the growing season to determine the most cost-effective plant management activities. DPW uses in-house staff and contracted specialist contractors to control invasive and undesirable plant species at the appropriate levels based on availability of resources.

The City uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to control invasive species. IPM involves the careful consideration of all available pest control techniques with the goal of reducing and minimizing risks to human health and the environment. The following techniques are used as appropriate:

- **Monitoring** sites on a regular basis for native and non-native presences and trends to help identify appropriate timing, level of effort, and control techniques.
- **Mowing.** Properly timed mowing at specific areas of a property may be used to limit undesirable woody vegetation, reduce seed production of undesirable plants, and/or promote initial native plant establishment.
- **Manual removal** of undesirable plants (such as Dames Rocket, Wild Parsnip, etc.) may involve hand digging, cutting, or pulling to eliminate those plants. This is often the most appropriate method when limited quantities of invasives are encountered.
- **Prescribed Burns.** The decision whether to burn is unique to each site based on desired results (i.e., control of invasive species, reducing undesirable woody species, and improving the vigor of native vegetation (particularly native grass species adapted to fire). Since burns are capable of setting back certain desirable species, it may not always be the appropriate management tool.
- **Chemical pest control.** Chemical pesticides are used within the IPM context in an environmentally appropriate manner and as directed by the manufacturer. If site conditions on any given day are not appropriate for chemical pesticide use (during high winds, for example) delays or other techniques may be used.

Allowed and Prohibited Uses at Stormwater Sites

In general, activities that are allowed and prohibited at Stormwater Management Sites are listed in Chapter 13 of the Municipal Code.

Allowed activities. Neighbors and the general public are welcome to enter stormwater management sites for recreational activities such as walking and nature viewing.

Prohibited Uses. Reference is made to Municipal Code Chapter 13. Stormwater properties are not intended to be an extension of abutting private property owners' yards. Prohibited uses include, but are not limited to:

- Structures (fences, retaining walls, outbuildings, play equipment, etc.)

- Gardens and plantings (grass, trees and shrubs, landscape beds, etc.)
- Storage of personal property (trailers, boats, building materials, etc.)
- Mowing of vegetation (the frequent and short mowing common with turf grass is not suitable for native vegetation)
- Chemical applications (fertilizers, herbicides, or other pesticides)
- Dumping waste (grass clippings, yard waste, food waste, trash, etc.)

Unapproved use of stormwater properties may:

- Make appropriate maintenance more difficult
- Be hazardous to City employees
- Introduce invasive seeds/plants
- Create dead spots in the native vegetation that allows opportunistic invaders a place to establish

If your property borders a stormwater property and you are unsure if your activities are encroaching, please call the Department of Public Works (920-832-6451). You may also reference the City of Appleton Interactive GIS Property Viewer map here: <http://gis.appleton.org/>