

Stormwater Detention Ponds, Vaults and Catch Basins

Why does the City of Mill Creek require stormwater detention facilities?

Stormwater detention facilities such as ponds and underground vaults have been required for developments since 1980. Surfaces such as roads, pavement and roofs increase stormwater runoff, which ends up in streams. Erosion, water pollution and damage to streams and pipes could occur without ponds and/or vaults.

Detention ponds store stormwater above ground. Detention vaults store stormwater underground. They both collect water and release it slowly in order to prevent flooding and property damage. It is important that detention ponds and vaults are maintained in order for them to function properly.



Who is responsible for maintaining detention facilities?

Detention facilities serving residential neighborhoods are generally owned and maintained by the homeowners in that subdivision. When plats are developed, there are provisions written on the recorded plat map that will state who owns and is responsible for maintaining the detention facility. The City of Mill Creek Municipal Code (Section 15.14.110) governing the maintenance, repair and operation of the stormwater system, notes that if a private stormwater facility serves multiple lots and the responsibility for maintenance has not been specified on a subdivision plat, short plat or other legal document, maintenance, operation and repair responsibility shall rest with the homeowners' association. In cases where there isn't a homeowners association, the responsibility lies on every property owner within that subdivision.

Detention facilities serving commercial property are owned and maintained by the owner of the property where the facility is located.

The City currently maintains eight detention ponds and nine vaults throughout the City. All catch basins within the City right-of-way (public street) get cleaned every other year. More

than 45 detention ponds are inspected annually by the City. Private detention vaults are also monitored by the City but less often.

Your homeowners association president may receive a letter with items that need to be addressed after detention ponds are inspected. The letter will give you a timeline of when the items need to be fixed.

Who is responsible for maintaining catch basins on private property?

The City cleans and maintains catch basins in the public right-of-way. Any catch basins that are located on private property are to be maintained, and repaired by the property owner. If you have a catch basin in your backyard, your homeowners association would be responsible for maintaining that catch basin.

The basic guideline for maintaining a catch basin is to have them cleaned when the sediment exceeds 60 percent of the sump depth as measured from the bottom of the basin to invert of the lowest pipe. On commercial property, the City recommends cleaning catch basins once a year due to the fact that there is more traffic and possibility of pollutants in the soils in the catch basin. If you have questions regarding whether your stormwater system needs cleaning, feel free to contact the City Stormwater Technician, Marci Chew, at (425) 745-1891.

How do I get technical assistance for maintaining my detention facility?

Homeowners associations, homeowners and businesses that own and maintain stormwater facilities can contact Marci Chew, the City's Stormwater Technician, for technical assistance.

Common maintenance can include debris and trash removal, vegetation management, sediment removal, fence repair (for fenced areas) and structural repair.

**Contact: Marci Chew
 Stormwater Technician
 (425) 745-1891**