

## Stormwater Ponds: For Water Quality, Not Recreation

### The Myth...



We often think of a pond as a pool of clear water sparkling with dancing diamonds of sunlight.

In fact, most ponds in modern residential areas have been constructed to retain pollutants or to prevent flooding. Why?

Simply put, a stormwater pond is a tool for managing the runoff from rainfall and snowmelt (stormwater). Stormwater ponds, like natural ponds or wetlands, help control flooding by slowing down surges and absorbing rainwater before reaching waterways. Stormwater ponds also help filter out pollutants collected by stormwater.

Stormwater can contain:

- sediment
- nutrients
- bacteria
- trace metals
- oil and grease
- organic contaminants such as pesticides.

Ponds are subject to algal blooms that can be the result of pet waste and excess fertilizer from neighboring yard runoff. These ponds can look & smell ugly because of the algal blooms yet continue to be effective for stormwater control. In fact, algal blooms indicate that phosphorus is being captured in the stormwater pond; in other words, the pond is working properly.

How to reduce algal blooms? Reduce phosphorus inputs:

1. If you fertilize your lawn, make sure to use phosphorus-free fertilizer...(look for a "0" in the middle of the 3 numbers on the bag)
2. Don't mow the filter strip! If there is a strip of long-rooted vegetation around the pond, leave it alone. It is there to help filter out pollutants from reaching the pond.
3. Pick up the poo! Pet waste contributes to excessive nutrients in stormwater runoff.

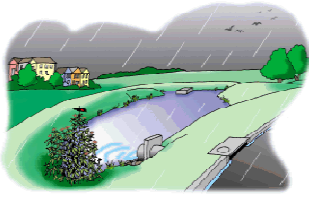
*Stormwater ponds are designed to retain pollutants and to control flooding, not for recreational purposes.*

### ...The Reality



### Benefits of Stormwater Management Ponds

- *Erosion Control*  
If not controlled, accumulated stormwater runoff can erode slopes and cause sediment to enter waterways.
- *Pollutant Removal*  
Some ponds retain water allowing time for settling out, and giving aquatic plants time to take up pollutants out of the water.
- *Flood Control*  
Stormwater ponds can provide flood control by slowing down surges or rates of flow.



A brochure on this topic is available at our new website:  
[www.cooncreekwd.org](http://www.cooncreekwd.org) under Information, then Water IQ  
brochure #5- Stormwater Ponds.

Questions? Please contact Coon Creek Watershed District at 763.755.0975 or email  
[info@cooncreekwd.org](mailto:info@cooncreekwd.org)

