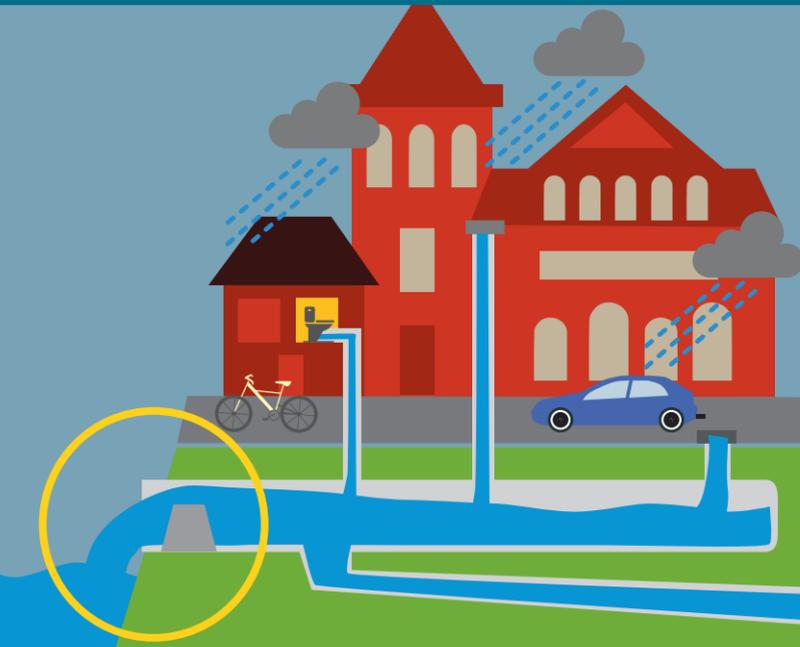


# WHATS THE BIG DEAL?

When it rains in Lancaster City, it falls on rooftops, streets, sidewalks and parking lots and then flows into the combined sewer system. Along the way, it picks up all kinds of pollutants from sidewalks, parking lots and streets like pet waste, fertilizers and pesticides, oil and automotive fluids.

Under normal circumstances stormwater and wastewater flow together to a treatment plant.



In heavy rains, the pipes overflow and polluted stormwater mixed with waste water flow into our rivers.

## What you can do

Every property owner and resident can do their part! If you own a property with green space you may be able to install green infrastructure which can go a long way to reducing stormwater overflows and save you money on your stormwater fee.

### 5 MINUTES

- Take a shower instead of a bath
- Turn off water while brushing teeth
- Tell your friends!

### 5 HOURS

- Install a rain barrel
- Plant a native tree
- Disconnect your downspouts

### 5 DAYS

- Install a green roof
- Set up a cistern
- Plant a rain garden

To learn more please visit [www.saveitlancaster.org](http://www.saveitlancaster.org)

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Lancaster's Green Infrastructure:  
 Working towards a more sustainable city

## What is stormwater?

Stormwater is rainfall or snowmelt that runs off surfaces such as rooftops, streets, sidewalks, and even compacted ground surfaces, often flowing directly into our sewer system or streams and rivers. As stormwater runs off those hard surfaces, it can pick up and carry away natural and man-made pollutants such as sediment, trash, oil and toxic chemicals, pesticides and fertilizers from lawns and gardens, and viruses and bacteria from pet waste.

## Why is stormwater pollution a problem?

Most of Lancaster's sewage and rainwater flow into one system called a Combined Sewer System (CSS). During rain events the CSS can be overwhelmed with the flow of sewage and rain water creating a Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO), which discharges stormwater mixed with sewage directly in local rivers. These polluted overflows impact downstream water quality. Many Cities, including Lancaster, are required by law to reduce the frequency and volume of these events.

In parts of the Lancaster without a CSO, stormwater is often discharged directly into our surrounding creeks and rivers untreated. All stormwater pollution, regardless of its source, is harmful to fish and other aquatic life and habitats, and can make recreational areas unsafe and unpleasant. The impacts stretch from the Conestoga River and Little Conestoga Creek all the way to the Chesapeake Bay.

## What is the stormwater fee?

A small fee was enacted in 2014 that is based on the amount of hard surfaces and rooftops from each property that actually generate stormwater runoff. The fee is being placed into a dedicated fund used only for the stormwater management program; the improvement and maintenance of existing systems and additional new green infrastructure. Rebates and credits are available to property owners who increase the amount of water captured on their properties through green infrastructure.



## Working towards a more sustainable city

Lancaster's green infrastructure projects have had significant environmental, social and economic benefits for the City.

### Environmental Benefits

- ▶ Recharges and improves quality of ground and surface waters
- ▶ Provides natural stormwater management
- ▶ Improves energy efficiency
- ▶ Reduces urban heat island effect
- ▶ Improves aquatic and wildlife habitat

### Social Benefits

- ▶ Improves aesthetics and livability of urban communities
- ▶ Increases recreational opportunities
- ▶ Improves water and air quality
- ▶ Fosters environmental education opportunities

### Economic Benefits

- ▶ Reduces existing and potential future costs of gray infrastructure
- ▶ Increases property values
- ▶ Lowers heating and energy costs

## Lancaster leading the way

In 2014, the City of Lancaster won the prestigious Best Urban BMP in the Bay award for the Plum and Walnut Green Intersection project. Green Infrastructure transformed a low-lying intersection with a large concrete island and dangerous merge lane into a model for stormwater management, improved traffic safety, and increased commercial activity. Located next to the Lancaster Brewing Company, the intersection is now home to native shrubs, perennials, and new tree species surrounding an outdoor cafe constructed of permeable pavers, featuring a public art amenity that acts as a cistern to capture stormwater from the brewery's roof for watering planters that are used by brewery owners to grow their own produce.



## What is Green Infrastructure?



Green infrastructure enhances the natural environment to manage rainwater where it falls, allowing water to soak into the ground, evaporate into the air or collect in storage units.

When it rains, stormwater runs off rooftops, streets, and sidewalks into a green infrastructure technology. The water soaks into an above ground rain garden or below ground stone bed where it filters through the soil and is absorbed by plants or evaporates from the surface. Excess water from storage on green roofs, cisterns, or underground is slowly released back into the sewer system.



## Solving Problems with Green Infrastructure

The City of Lancaster is solving their stormwater problem through the implementation of a 25 year green infrastructure plan. The plan's mission is to provide more livable, sustainable neighborhoods for City residents and reduce combined sewer overflows and nutrient loads.