

Stormwater Runoff

is generally rainwater that is unable to soak back into the ground and runs off surfaces like roads, roofs, driveways and lawns.



Runoff from my neighbor's property is coming onto mine.

Land alterations can change the way runoff leaves someone's property. Poorly maintained home drainage systems prevents them from working correctly. Similarly, neighborhood ditches and systems can become clogged with debris and cannot remove stormwater from neighborhoods.

Runoff should be directed toward the street or to a drainage system. However, downstream property owners are generally responsible for receiving runoff from roads cross culverts and from other upstream property owners.



What is the County's responsibility to maintain runoff or drainage?

County staff performs regular maintenance and inspection of our publicly owned stormwater system to reduce flooding. The County also reviews, inspects and issues permits for development and land alteration plans, which ensure that all development and redevelopment meet County and State regulations.

What is my responsibility for addressing runoff or drainage problems?

Your property also needs to be maintained to ensure adequate drainage during heavy rains. Here's what you can do:

- Maintain your drainage system

Know your stormwater system and make sure it is clean and functional. Storm drains collect water and move it downstream. Grates cluttered with leaves, garbage and other debris block flow and create flooding.

- Be a good neighbor

In our rainy climate, stormwater is generally unavoidable. Water that is unable to soak into the ground will find its natural route downstream, often across roadways, paths and private property. Work with your neighbors to clear brush, debris and blockages from neighborhood ditches. Make sure driveway culverts are clean, functional, and constructed correctly.

Concerns with stormwater flow between neighboring properties are a private issue, and the County cannot intervene. Uphill property owners should consider how their landscaping and grading could impact lower properties, and downhill property owners should recognize that water always follows the laws of gravity. A reasonable and cooperative compromise serves both parties and fosters neighborhood harmony.

Can I alter the drainage from my property?

Stormwater runoff is considered a "common enemy," and everyone has the general right to protect their property from upstream flows. But, this right is mitigated by a few considerations. First, you cannot block a natural drainage course. Second, the water needs to leave your property in the same manner and amount as it did before the changes to the drainage were done. Finally, and above all else, you must exercise due care to avoid unnecessary damage.



See an issue outside of your property? Report flooding or drainage problems in the public stormwater system at 360.337.5777 or Kitsap1@co.kitsap.wa.us. NEVER REMOVE THE LID OR CLIMB INTO A STORM DRAIN, AND NEVER ATTEMPT TO CLEAR ONE LOCATED IN A BUSY STREET.