

# What is a Grassed Swale?

Grass swales are open channels that are designed to convey stormwater runoff through a natural, vegetative filter. These swales provide more runoff filtration and volume reduction compared to the traditional system of curbs and gutters with storm drain inlets and pipes.



*properly  
maintained  
and  
functional*



*erosion due  
to improper  
maintenance*

## Maintaining Your Stormwater Control Measure

Property owners are responsible for inspecting and maintaining SCMs on their property. Inspection and maintenance requirements for your specific SCM are filed with your property deed. These documents are available through the Metro Nashville Register of Deeds.

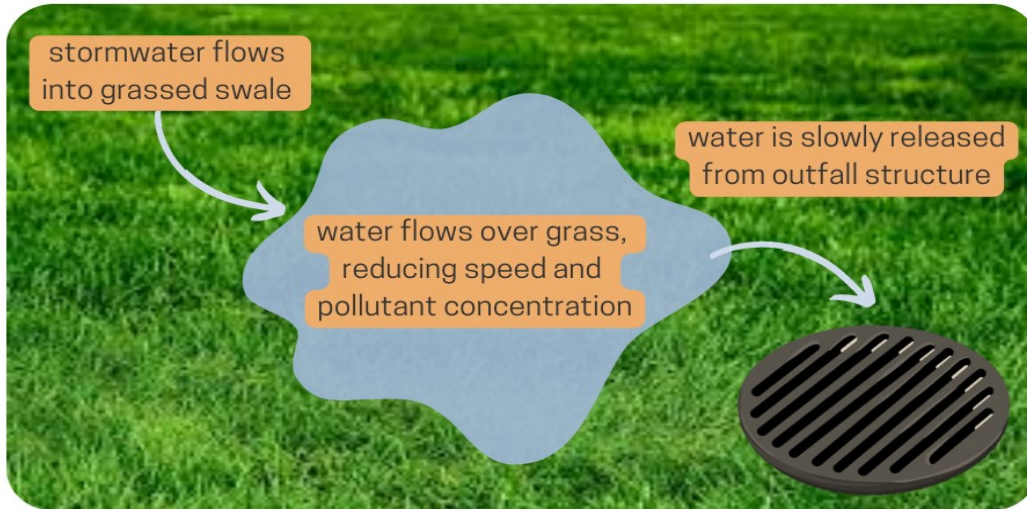
### Typical Inspection and Maintenance Concerns Include:

- Observe the bed. Is there a healthy stand of grass? Is there any erosion? Is there any standing water? Is there any trash?
- Are trees and shrubs starting to grow within the channel that need to be controlled?
- To avoid erosion by keeping the grass well-established, mow less frequently than normal turf, and do not mow too short.
- Inspect the outlet. Is it clogged with sediment, trash, and/or vegetation?
- Avoid possibly compacting soil by not using heavy equipment, such as riding lawnmowers, on the swale
- Visit the grassed swale site after a rain storm, and see if there are long durations of ponding. If so, maintenance may be required.
- If maintenance needs are identified during the inspection, ensure that service is performed in a timely manner to prevent larger problems from occurring in the future.

For more information, visit [scm.nashville.gov](http://scm.nashville.gov)  
or call Metro Water Services at (615) 880-2420



# How does a Grassed Swale work?

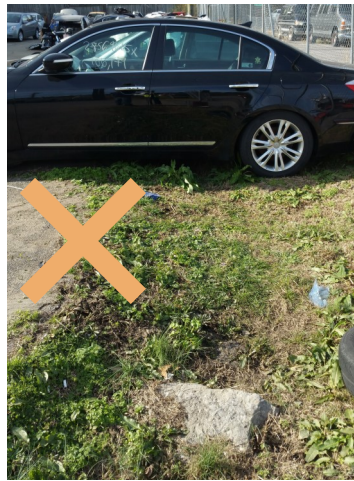


Stormwater runoff flows into the grassed swale which typically has a flat bottom and lots of grass to spread out the water. This slows down the flow of water to allow for infiltration and the filtering out of sediment and other pollutants prior to discharging to local creeks, streams, and rivers.

## Grassed Swale: Common Issues and Concerns



The use of weed killer in grassed swales kills grass and leads to increased erosion.



This grassed swale is being compacted by a vehicle which decreases infiltration and increases erosion.