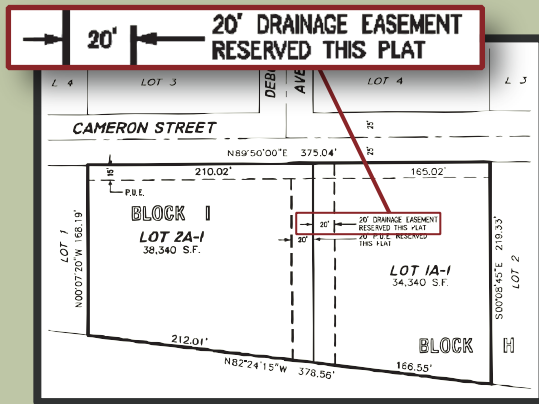


In most cases in Spokane County, the private landowner or the subdivision's Homeowner's Association is responsible for maintaining drainage easements under local regulations.

To avoid flooding problems, costly drainage facility replacement, or legal action, a prospective homebuyer, new homeowner, or someone planning to install new landscaping should consult the original plat, in addition to the road and drainage plans for the property or subdivision. This will help identify any easements that exist nearby or on-site.



EXAMPLE OF A DRAINAGE EASEMENT LABELED ON A SUBDIVISION PLAT

These documents are accessible at the Spokane County Public Works building. For records on incorporated properties, contact the Cities of Spokane or Spokane Valley, respectively.

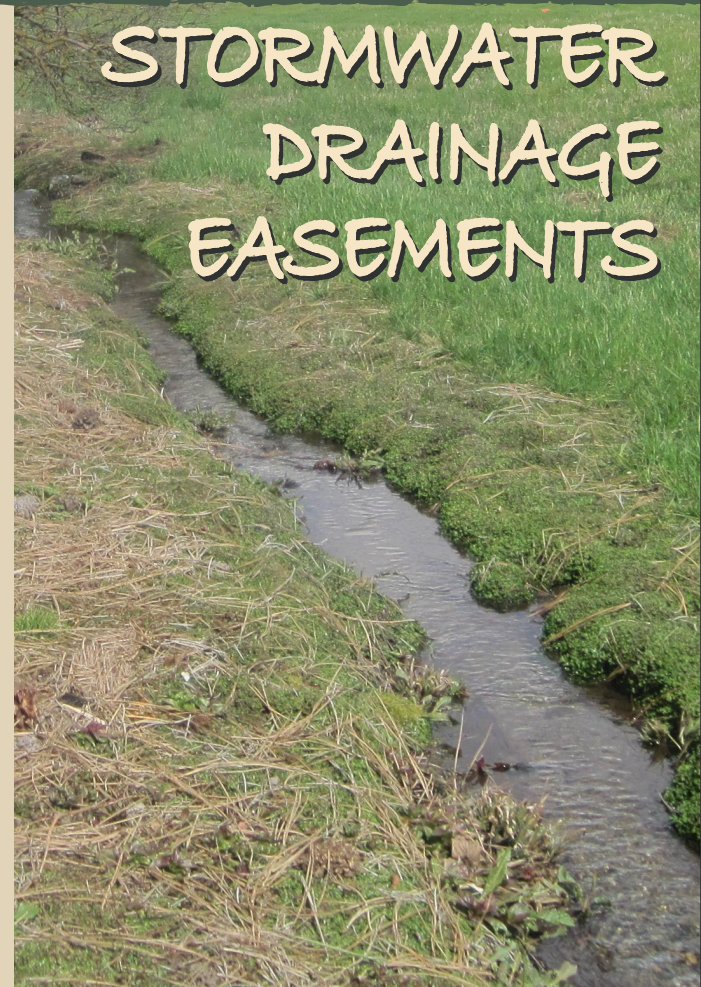
FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT STORMWATER EASEMENTS, STORMWATER SWALES, OR STORMWATER MANAGEMENT IN SPOKANE COUNTY, CONTACT:

Spokane County Stormwater Utility
1026 West Broadway Avenue
Spokane, WA 99260-7284
www.spokanecounty.org
Phone: 509-477-3600
Fax: 509-477-7655



HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE TO

STORMWATER DRAINAGE EASEMENTS



WHY MANAGE STORMWATER?

As our population grows and development continues, impervious surfaces such as paved roads, parking lots, driveways, and rooftops also increase. Impervious surfaces decrease the area where rain once naturally infiltrated into the ground, and increase the amount of stormwater runoff.

Due to these changes, it is necessary to provide places to manage runoff to prevent erosion and flooding. Stormwater facilities such as swales and ponds also provide essential treatment of polluted stormwater before it infiltrates down to the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer.



Drainage easements are areas of land that are set aside to assist in the management of stormwater runoff. Easements can vary in size, shape, and location. Typically, they run along property lines and measure between 10 and 20 feet wide.

Within the easement there may be a drainage ditch, natural drainage channel, a stormwater pipe, or a swale; all of which are used to convey stormwater runoff in a controlled manner.

WHAT ARE DRAINAGE EASEMENTS?

Easements can also be located at the front of a lot, next to the roadway.

Most drainage easements and swales are for the purpose of handling the water from a rainstorm or snowmelt.

HOW CAN DRAINAGE EASEMENTS HELP PREVENT FLOODING?

When drainage facilities are obstructed or filled in, stormwater cannot be conveyed properly or infiltrate the ground. This is what causes flooding over the roadways, in yards, or in our basements!

Easements of all types should be kept unobstructed to allow the stormwater runoff system to function properly.

WHAT CAN BE PLACED IN A DRAINAGE EASEMENT?

- ▶ Always check with Spokane County before planting anything within a drainage easement!
- ▶ Fences and structures that block flowing water may not be installed in or across drainage easements.
- ▶ Natural drainage channels, ponds, swales, and roadside ditches operate best when planted with seed material or sod over well-drained soils. The grass helps capture and filter pollutants from the stormwater as the water seeps through the soil.
- ▶ Easements may be landscaped with trees or shrubs as long as they do not obstruct the flow of water or reduce the facility's capacity or treatment area.
- ▶ Trees and shrubs should only be planted at the tops of ditches or swales; not on the bottom or swale floor.
- ▶ Do not leave fill, grass clippings, or yard waste of any type in the easement!

