

Infiltration Trenches and Dry Wells

Infiltration trenches and dry wells are gravel-filled areas in your yard that store rainwater underground, allowing for more storage and infiltration of runoff than the original soil allowed. Their location is flexible and does not need to interfere with the use of your yard. Possible locations include under your lawn or patio, adjacent to your driveway, or other areas of your yard.

The benefits of an infiltration trench and dry well include:

- A reduction in stormwater runoff from your property. This also reduces the amount of sediment and other pollutants that would be washed away with the runoff into nearby storm drains and local streams.
- Groundwater recharge. The slow release of the water allows it to soak into the ground, which supplies water to local streams in between storms.

To create an infiltration trench, the existing soil is removed from an area of your yard, and then filled with gravel. Sod or other pervious materials can be placed on top of the infiltration trench. A PVC pipe may be installed in the infiltration trench to allow for maintenance, but this is the only visible marker of the trench. A dry well is very similar to an infiltration trench, but includes an underground, perforated pipe or container surrounded by gravel in its design.

When serving a single-family home, these practices typically need little special maintenance, particularly if it is covered by lawn or located beneath a patio. It's a good idea to check after a major storm to make sure the drains are functioning. If a trench is surfaced with gravel, accumulated sediment must be removed along with any weeds.

Learn more about infiltration trenches and dry wells through the links on the StormwaterWise Landscapes webpage.

Arlington's StormwaterWise Landscapes Program

www.arlingtonva.us/stormwaterwise



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Once installed, the infiltration trench is invisible except for a short portion of PVC pipe used to maintain the trench.