



# Property Owner's Guide to BMP Maintenance

## 6.0 Helpful Resources

### NEED HELP WITH YOUR BMP?

- More technical questions may require the assistance of a professional engineer or landscape architect.
- Landscape firms can help you maintain your BMP's soil and vegetation.
- Master Gardeners are volunteers with valuable plant knowledge.
- Native Plant Nurseries can provide plants and information on keeping them healthy.
- Additional, online resources are also included in this section.
- The City of Birmingham's Storm Water Management Department can answer administrative questions about your BMP or refer you to additional resources.

### Getting Additional Help with BMPs

Whether you are an individual residential property owner, a homeowners' association representative, a non-residential property owner, a property manager, or part of a landscape or property maintenance staff, this Manual is intended to provide guidance for the protection, inspection, maintenance, and planning needed to keep your BMP functioning properly.

Sometimes, BMPs will require maintenance that requires more technical or specialized expertise. This Section is designed to guide you to additional resources.



### Engineers and Landscape Architects

BMPs are used to meet flooding, erosion, and pollution control requirements. Engineers and landscape architects are specially trained to conduct the calculations required to meet these requirements and design BMPs accordingly. In the City of Birmingham, the City of Birmingham Storm Water Design Manual is used and includes all the requirements for designing and installing a BMP. If your BMP is experiencing problems despite regular maintenance and upkeep, or if it is damaged and its components need repairs, then it may be time to obtain the services of a technical specialist.

The following websites may provide additional information on finding an engineer or landscape architect:

Alabama Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects: <http://www.alabamaasla.com/>

Alabama Society of Professional Engineers: <http://myaspe.com/#/home>



## Landscape Firms

Vegetated areas may require the use of a professional landscape firm to maintain healthy vegetation, manage weeds, replant problem areas, and maintain optimal soil and drainage conditions. Before hiring a landscape firm or having one work on your property, discuss with them they will be working with a BMP designed to manage storm water runoff. They need to be aware that maintenance of your BMP is required by local ordinance and that special care will be needed to protect the BMP components. Communicate the following to any landscape firms working on your property:

- Higher mowing heights and less frequent mowing may be required than conventional landscaping.
- Use of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides may be more limited than conventional landscaping.
- Heavy equipment should be avoided in vegetated areas and areas where infiltration occurs.
- The BMP area should be kept clear of grass clippings, leaf piles, and other plant trimmings.
- Also inform landscape firms of any other requirements of your maintenance agreement or planting plan.



## Master Gardeners

Master Gardeners are gardeners that have been specially trained and sponsored by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. Master Gardeners volunteer their expertise and services to the community, providing reliable, gardening information and education opportunities. Both the State of Alabama and Jefferson County have Master Gardener groups that may have resources and gardeners available to answer questions and help with the vegetation, soil, and media in your BMP. They can be reached through the following websites:

Jefferson County Master Gardeners: <https://jeffcomg.org/>

Alabama Master Gardeners Association: <http://alabamamg.org/>

## Native Plant Nurseries

Even with careful management, vegetated BMPs will need additional planting to replace dead or unhealthy plants. Plants in a BMP serve very specific purposes, and the BMP may not function well if the wrong plants are used. If you are not sure what plants were planted in your BMP, your record drawing should have the original planting plan. Due to their deep roots and ability to withstand local conditions, native plants are most often used in BMPs. All commercial nurseries will not have the specific plants you need. Native plant nurseries will have the inventory and the expertise you need to maintain your vegetation. If you choose to contact a nursery, make sure they are familiar with your type of BMP by sharing the pertinent section of this Manual and the Record Drawings of your BMP.



## City Storm Water Department

The Storm Water Management Department maintains the City of Birmingham Storm Water Design Manual, which is a technical manual used by engineers and planners to design BMPs for a development site. Most of the information included is more applicable to selecting or designing a BMP; however, some background information and technical drawings may be useful to a BMP owner. It is available here:

<https://www.birminghamal.gov/storm-water-management/post-construction/>

The City of Birmingham's Storm Water Management Department may be able to provide record drawings and administrative assistance for inspection of your BMP. The Storm Water Management Department can be reached at Storm Water Management Department, Department of Planning, Engineering & Permits, 710 North 20th Street, Birmingham AL 35203, or by phone at 205-254-7771.

## Additional Online Resources

All across the country, cities and private landowners are working to reduce negative impacts of storm water through the use of BMPs. Below are some recommended websites that may be able to provide additional information on BMPs. As you conduct your own research, keep in mind that some BMPs and recommendations you find may not be applicable to local conditions or your specific BMP.

Alabama A&M and Auburn University Extension Water Resources Web Site

<http://www.aces.edu/natural-resources/water-resources/>

Alabama Department of Environmental Management Water Programs

<http://www.adem.state.al.us/programs/water/default.cnt>

Alabama Low Impact Development Handbook

<http://adem.alabama.gov/programs/water/waterforms/LIDHandbook.pdf>

Alabama Soil & Water Conservation Committee Erosion and Sediment Control Resources

<https://alconservationdistricts.gov/resources/erosion-and-sediment-control/>

Alabama Wildflower Society

<http://www.alwildflowers.org/>

Environmental Protection Agency Stormwater Pollution Website

<https://www.epa.gov/npdes/npdes-stormwater-program>

Georgia Stormwater Management Manual

<https://atlantaregional.org/natural-resources/water/georgia-stormwater-management-manual/>