

RETENTION & DETENTION PONDS: HOW DO THEY FUNCTION AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

You have probably noticed several rainwater retention ponds throughout the City, or even in your neighborhood. Although some might view these structures as aesthetic features, they serve a much more important purpose.



Garlic Creek Retention Pond

What is a Retention Pond?

At first glance, a retention pond looks like your average pond. However, they play an important role in controlling storm water runoff. As you are probably well aware, flooding is often a major concern in Central Texas. Residential areas are prone to flooding and must deal with storm water runoff from streets, driveways, walkways, and roofs. Retention ponds are used to hold and distribute rain runoff, which in turn helps prevent flooding.

They are often landscaped with a variety of grasses, shrubs, and/or wetland plants to provide bank stability. The aquatic vegetation in retention ponds helps remove pollutants from nearby neighborhoods that wash into the ponds. The vegetation blocks trash from getting into rivers and streams. Plants, gravel, and sand also help filter out pollutants from entering waterways and our drinking water.

It is important that the aquatic vegetation is NOT removed or killed.



Aquatic Vegetation at Garlic Creek Retention Pond

(This is a recent photo of vegetation that has been killed at the Garlic Creek Retention Pond)

What is a Detention Pond?

The main difference between a detention and a retention pond is whether or not it has a permanent pool of water. A detention pond is designed as a “dry pond.” Its purpose is to hold back flood waters and slowly release the water so that creeks and rivers do not become flooded.

Are the City of Buda’s Retention & Detention Ponds Maintained?

Yes. Our Public Works department mows and maintains the ponds in compliance with our storm water permits through the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Public Works has a crew dedicated to maintaining drainage ways and ponds. The ponds are on a routine maintenance schedule. However, rain can impact that schedule as it makes it too muddy to move equipment.



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Here is how you can help us keep our retention ponds functioning properly, along with some other tips:

- Do not litter
- Do not pour chemicals or other wastes onto the street or in storm drains
- Do not over fertilize your lawn. Do not fertilize when heavy rains are anticipated. The fertilizer will run off into ponds, creeks, and rivers and negatively impact water quality.
- Do not use the ponds for any recreation activities where your body is in contact with the water
- Do not allow your pets to drink or swim in the water
- Do not water your lawn with water from the ponds
- Do not eat fish from pond