

## Do you know what a swale is? How about a berm?

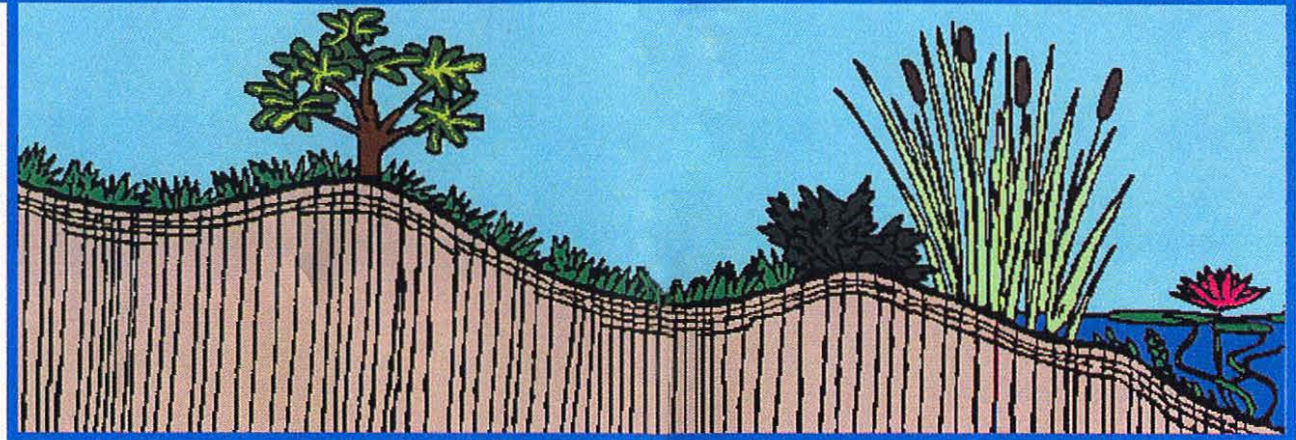
When land is converted from its natural state to other uses, such as roads, homes, and shopping centers, many impervious or paved surfaces are created.

Rainfall becomes stormwater when it can no longer soak into the ground and “runs off” the impervious surfaces.

The volume, speed and pollutants of stormwater runoff increase with land development.

Stormwater management practices are used to retain or detain runoff to filter out the pollutants.

These practices also minimize flooding, protect property and reduce pollution of water bodies.



**SWALES** are one of the most commonly used stormwater practices.

For many years, swales have been used to direct runoff from rural high-ways and residential streets

Today, swales not only direct stormwater but also help filter runoff and reduce pollutants.

A swale slows down the rapid flow of stormwater runoff by ponding water between its sloping sides, often called berms.

The ponding not only slows the rate of flow but allows pollutants to settle out of the water.

When the swale becomes full, the cleaner surface water will spill over the berm and slowly run into a local water body.

Eventually, the remaining ponded water will either evaporate or infiltrate into the soil.