

The Commons at Cordata Disbursement Trench Guidelines

Individual Property Management of The Commons Stormwater System

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1. WHAT IS A DISPURSEMENT TRENCH?

Disbursement trenches are designed so that the stormwater eventually soaks into the ground, imitating natural conditions and recharging groundwater supplies. The trenches also trap pollutants, making them a highly valued stormwater management tool.

- Located at the back of most properties that buffer designated wetland areas
- Consists of a rectangular strip of drain rock, a white cap, and a drain
- Most likely framed by wooden boards that separate the rock from the wetland area

2. WHY DOES MY PROPERTY HAVE A DISPURSEMENT TRENCH?

- It is key to water flow for our collective stormwater system.
- Each property is built on an existing wetland that, without management, would naturally flood over the course of the year and after every major rainstorm.
- Each property is built with natural sloping terrain to ensure that rainwater flows into the wetlands or a designed stormwater system, rather than flooding our properties.
- The disbursement trench is designed to catch a significant amount of rainwater flowing into the wetlands and redirect the water to the stormwater management system.
- Without a disbursement trench the wetlands will naturally become oversaturated causing our individual and collective properties to flood.

3. HOW DO I MAINTAIN MY DISPURSEMENT TRENCH?

- Inspect the trench twice a year and conduct regular maintenance once a year. If you observe water flowing out of your grate, your trench is clogged.
- There are 3 elements to a well-maintained disbursement trench:
 1. Ensure that the trench is clear of obstruction, dirt, debris and vegetation (See FIGURE 1 and 2)
 2. Ensure that the drain grate is clear of obstruction and open the drain to clear out excessive debris and sediment (See FIGURE 3 and 4)
 3. Refill the trench with drain rock as needed to ensure that the trench keeps its designed dimensions. Rock will flow away naturally over time and will need to be refilled. Maintaining the wood framing (if present) will help ensure the trench's durability over time. (See FIGURE 5)

4. WHO INSPECTS DISPURSEMENT TRENCHES?

- Every year the City of Bellingham inspects our stormwater system. Because the disbursement trenches are on private property a city yearly inspection is not feasible.
- However, poor maintenance of these trenches will over time erode the integrity of our storm water system causing us to fail the city's inspection and resulting in added costs for our association.
- Each property owner has a communal responsibility to maintain the disbursement trench on their property.
- The Commons Association will not be inspecting each property's disbursement trench, but are more than happy to help homeowners determine maintenance needs. Contact: vicepres.commonscoa@gmail.com for assistance.



FIGURE 1: Trench in need maintenance



FIGURE 2: Well-maintained trench.



FIGURE 3: Grate in need of clearing



FIGURE 4: Clear drain with mild sediment



FIGURE 5: Trench in need of drain rock. Note the bottom-left corner of the photo where the builder laid a grid for the trench's original drain