

Storm Drainage Bylaw Homeowner Info

The Storm Drainage Bylaw

As of September 9, 2013, the new Storm Drainage Bylaw (18-13) came into effect for Okotoks. The bylaw regulates the storm sewer and drainage system by requiring that both the public and industry manage drainage and water quality.

The Bylaw applies to all residents, business owners, workers in residential or commercial construction, or any industry within the town of Okotoks.

Why is the Storm Drainage Bylaw Necessary?

The storm sewer and drainage system is a network of drains, pipes and storm ponds designed to channel stormwater directly to the Sheep River. Everything you wash down the storm drains such as trash, pesticides, soil and chemicals ends up in the river. What we do to manage and control the substances and materials that enter our drainage system does make a difference and will have a positive impact on the quality and quantity of stormwater entering the river.

Main Points of Storm Drainage Bylaw

Downspouts

The Bylaw requires downspouts to end at least 2 metres away from any sidewalk, road, park, alley, lane or surface drainage facility where practical. The 2 metre buffer zone allows some of the runoff to absorb into the ground before it enters the storm system. It also helps prevent icing on sidewalks and lanes in the winter. Downspouts should never be connected to the foundation drain or weeping tile. Downspouts should, where practical, be pointed to the front and rear of the property (not towards a neighbour), and water from a hose or similar device should not be directed/flowing onto a neighbouring property.

Surface Drainage Facilities

Surface drainage facilities include concrete swales (channels or gutters), grassed swales, walkways and easements. The Bylaw requires surface drainage facilities to be kept clear of debris and obstructions including, but not limited to dirt, soil, leaves, snow and ice at all times. Retaining walls, terraces, gardens, play structures or sheds cannot be constructed or placed in this area. In heavy runoff events, it's possible for these systems to become full of rainwater/snow melt; any obstructions could cause flooding.

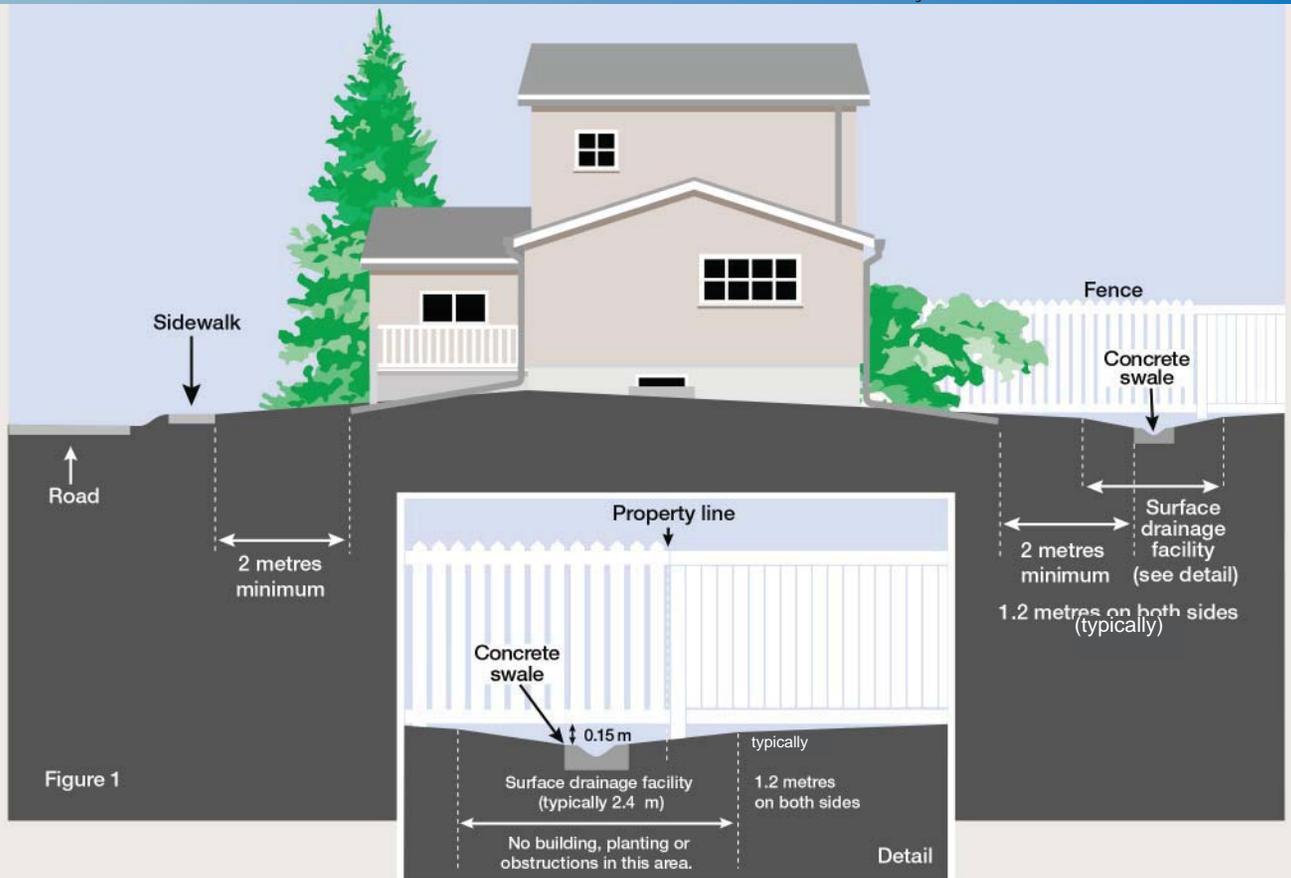
Concrete swales commonly run along the back or side of residential properties. If a fence must be built over a concrete swale, you must provide at least 0.15 metres (six inches) of clearance between the bottom of the fence and the top of the swale (see Figure 1).

Prohibited Materials/Substances

To protect the quality of stormwater entering the river and to avoid obstructions, certain materials and contaminants are prohibited from entering the storm sewer and drainage system:

- soil, sediment or other solid matter;
- fecal matter, animal waste, dead animals or animal parts;
- cooking oils & grease;
- gasoline, motor oil, transmission fluid & antifreeze;
- solvents, paints;
- cement or concrete wastes;

- sawdust, wood, fiberboard or construction materials;
- yard waste;
- pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers;
- biomedical waste or general medical waste;
- hazardous waste;
- industrial waste
- soaps or detergents
- water from hot tubs
- any substance or combination of substances that emits an odour
- fish and other aquatic fauna or flora not authorized
- any other material or substance not expressly allowed in Section 3.1 of bylaw



Permitted Materials/Substances

- foundation drainage
- water from a portable swimming pool, decorative pond or fountain having a capacity of 3 cubic metres (3000 litres) or less
- water from irrigating or otherwise watering a lawn, garden, trees or other landscaping with potable water
- water from general maintenance of a dwelling or property with potable water
- water that may be mixed with bio-degradable soap that has been used for washing a vehicle on the approved watering day for that residence
- water resulting from extinguishing fires

Interceptors

An interceptor is a receptacle or other device approved by the Town, and designed to prevent oil, grit and other matter from passing from the source into the storm drainage system. They collect and separate contaminants and obstructive materials to improve stormwater quality. The Bylaw requires regular maintenance of interceptors occur to ensure optimum performance.

What happens if you don't comply with the Storm Drainage Bylaw

Failure to comply with the Storm Drainage Bylaw could result in:

- contaminants or pollutants being released into our river
- obstructions in the storm drainage system (i.e. blocked swales or storm sewer backup in the pipe system)
- flooding
- fines ranging from \$75-\$10,000 and/or remedial orders

Report Unlawful Discharges - It's Your Responsibility

The Bylaw now obligates the responsible party to report and mitigate any unauthorized discharge of prohibited materials whether accidental or intentional.

Who Should I Contact to Report a Breach of the Bylaw

Call Municipal Enforcement at 403-938-8913 to report the incident.

For More Information

To view the Storm Drainage Bylaw (18-13) visit www.okotoks.ca. Click on eServices, Town Bylaws, 2013 and click on Bylaw 18-13.

If there are problems with the drainage on your property, your first contact should be with your builder. If the issues are not resolved, contact the Engineering Services at 403-938-8910 or Town of Okotoks Operations at 403-995-2790 for further information.

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