



City of Alexandria, Virginia
Transportation & Environmental Services, Stormwater Management Division
Self-Certification Guide for Residential Flow Thru Planter Box

Introduction

Residential stormwater practices, such as permeable pavement and rain gardens, help to reduce stormwater pollution that runs off impervious areas.

Functioning stormwater or landscaping practices may be eligible for a partial stormwater utility fee reduction under the City's Stormwater Fee Credit Policy. For more information regarding the credit policy, please refer to the [Stormwater Utility Fee Credit Manual](#).

The Purpose of This Guide

This guide is intended to be used to inspect a residential stormwater practice that has already been installed on a single-family or townhouse lot. Inspecting your stormwater management practice identifies maintenance, repairs, or replacement as needed. Performing routine inspection and maintenance is required for practices to continue to function.

This guide does not replace any existing inspection requirements for stormwater management BMPs installed as a mandatory condition of development and covered by a maintenance agreement with the property owner.

About Self-Certification

For residential townhome and single family property owners applying for stormwater utility fee credits, a self-certification stating that you have inspected your stormwater practice and observe it to be in fully functioning condition is required at the time of application. During the City's review of your application, you may be asked to complete this guide and provide it to the City.

Instructions

Step 1. Complete this guide during your annual inspection.

Step 2. If asked to provide this form, it may be sent via email to stormwater@alexandriava.gov or mailed to:

Transportation and Environmental Services
Stormwater Division
2900-B Business Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22314



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Flow Thru Planter Box

Flow thru planter boxes serve the same purpose as rain gardens but are adapted to fit into “containers” within urban landscapes. Stormwater planters take advantage of limited space by placing a soil filter in a container located above ground or at grade.

Certification Checklist

Check the box to confirm that each item was inspected and that the practice is in functioning condition and eligible for Stormwater Utility Fee Credits:

The planter box is free of any structural damage

Check the planter box for cracks or buckling, tears in the liner, or signs of water damage.

The planter box is free of leaks

Check the planter box walls for signs of water leaking. This can be evidenced by water streaks along the planter box wall.

Water that pools in the planter box during rain events drains within 48 hours

Water may pond in the planter box during rain events. This water should drain into the mulch and soil media within 48 hours. Ensure there is space from the top of mulch to the planter box edge to allow ponding to occur.

Plants cover the planting bed consistently and uniformly (about 75%-90% cover)

A consistent and uniform planting cover will dissipate incoming runoff, absorb stormwater, and reduce erosion of mulch in the planter box.

The planter bed is free of dead plants

Remove and replant dead plants. Refer to the [Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora](#) identify plants native to the region. Prune dead branches from trees and shrubs and deadhead perennials if needed to encourage blooming.

The planting bed consists of native plant species and is free from invasive plants

Native plants are adapted to local soils and climate conditions and help preserve natural ecosystems. Refer to the [Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora](#) identify plants native to the region.

The mulch is in an un-compacted state and is between 2”-3” thick

Mulch should be relatively loose and between 2 to 3 inches thick. This allows stormwater runoff to flow into the underlying soil media.



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Certification Checklist (continued)

- The plant bed is free of litter, debris and sediment buildup**

Litter, debris and sediment buildup on the surface clogs mulch or soil media, creating a barrier for stormwater to flow through the planter box.

- The gutter and downspout leading to the planter box is free of leaves and other debris**

The gutter and downspout should be cleared of leaves and debris every spring and fall to keep water flowing to your planter box and protect your home from roof leaks and water damage.

- The energy dissipator has not washed away**

The energy dissipator typically consists of cobble stones placed on top of mulch below the incoming downspout. Check to ensure stones are still in place to prevent erosion of mulch.

Owner Information

Property Address: _____

Owner Name: _____