

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there inspections after the house is complete/occupied?

No.

Won't requiring new homes or larger renovation projects to retain water on their property for that long a time cause flooding problems in the new or renovated house?

No, that's why the drainage plan, when required, must be professionally developed by a licensed professional civil engineer or land surveyor working for the builder.

Why does the Town need to approve the plan and to perform inspections during construction of the drainage system if the system must be certified by a licensed professional engineer or land surveyor and must function as specified in the ordinance? Also, if the Town requires that any drainage system be certified "as built" why do we need such inspections?

To assure effectiveness of the drainage system, it is necessary to perform independent drainage plan evaluations and inspections of the system during construction and when construction is complete. The Town must do this since the County does not inspect drainage plans or systems covered under the Town's ordinance.

How many inspections related to drainage will there be for a project?

There will likely be no more than three, maybe even just two. The exact number of site visits required will depend on the project. For example, the first three requirements of inspecting an infiltration system can be done in the same morning, and the fourth may or may not be necessary or may be combined with the fifth. For open channel systems, the first two and the last two requirements may be done at the same time.

Is the 700 square foot footprint criterion based on the ground level footprint or would it be based on the second floor footprint if that floor were larger due to an overhanging bay?

The 700 square foot criterion always refers to the ground level footprint, not the second floor footprint.

If an impervious surface such as concrete is removed to the soil level, can a credit in square feet be given for that area for exchanging an impervious to a pervious surface, which would then be applied to the 700 square foot threshold calculation?

No. The ordinance does not provide for credits for removing impervious material and therefore does not affect the 700 square foot threshold.

If an owner adds a new porch roof over an existing stoop (and does not replace the existing stoop), is the new roof included in the square feet calculations?

No.

If an owner adds a raised wood deck above the ground (and the water can run off between the cracks to the grassed area below), must the deck be included in the square footage calculations?

No. The water will run to the ground eventually anyway.

If the owner adds a raised bay window on the first floor, but the floor joists are cantilevered over the finished grade below, must the bay window be included in the square footage calculations?

No. The 700 square feet criterion always refers to the ground level footprint.

What is an impervious surface?

The Maryland Stormwater Design Manual defines an impervious surface as "Those surfaces in the landscape that cannot

infiltrate rainfall consisting of building rooftops, pavement, sidewalks, driveways, etc.”

If the owner uses flagstone pavers set in stone dust, will this walk be considered a pervious surface?

The walk will be considered impervious, since flagstone on stone dust is essentially impervious and rapidly becomes impervious.

Does a homeowner, not a builder, need to get a performance bond under this ordinance? Won't this tie up a lot of extra money?

If the homeowner's project is not exempt, yes, the homeowner needs to get a performance bond. But on a typical renovation project (\$350,000), the additional cost will be under one-half of one percent of the total project cost, and for larger projects even less.

<i>AVERAGE PROJECT COST</i>	\$350,000
Additional cost of water drainage plan and system	\$ 15,000
Cost of performance bond at 10% of this cost	\$ 1,500
<i>TOTAL PROJECT COST</i>	\$366,500
<i>Cost of performance bond as percentage of project cost</i>	0.41%

What are examples of “an other activity that can reasonably be expected to alter the flow of water”?

Two examples are a new driveway (replacement of an existing one is not covered by the ordinance) and a patio.

Is a drainage plan required for a development activity that does not alter contour but does create impervious surface (for example, an 800 square foot flagstone patio on a lot that is over 10,000 square feet)?

Yes, an 800 square foot flagstone patio would require a drainage plan. Even if it is on a large lot, the removal of such a large amount of pervious surface for rain to soak into could create issues for neighbors.

What are the guidelines mentioned in the ordinance?

These are administrative, and are voluntary, and are NOT part of the ordinance. As part of the review of a water drainage plan, the Town Engineer will examine how the applicant addresses the guideline items. All these will be considered positively; they include things like use of permeable materials for driveways, sump pump usage during construction runs through a silt filtration box, etc. The Town Manager could make some of these administrative regulations if he deems that appropriate. He could also ignore some if they prove too pie-in-the-sky. The guidelines are voluntary best practices.