

Improving Waterways

Waterways provide important environmental, economic and recreational benefits to society but in the past, they have been managed with little consideration for their ecological health.

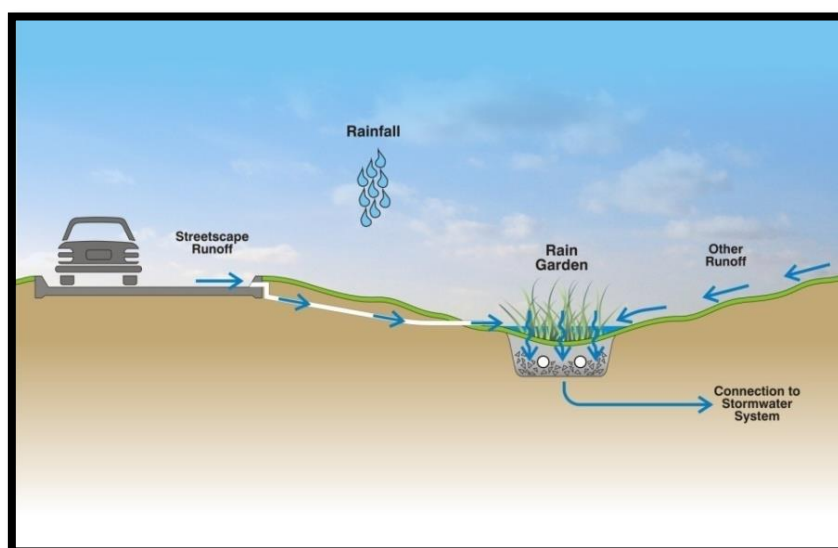
In the past 200 years, the banks and shape of our rivers have been drastically altered to manage flooding and improve transport access. Civil engineering practices have efficiently transported water off the streets and away from houses directly into rivers via the stormwater system. This means that when it rains, large volumes of fast-flowing water carrying organic and inorganic substances such as oils, fertilizers, bacteria, sand and heavy metals from roofs, roads and paved areas flood into our waterways. (Preuss & Duke 1996)



We can improve waterway quality by reshaping and revegetating river banks. We can also improve waterways by slowing runoff and minimising stormwater pollution. Rain gardens provide one approach to slow stormwater flows and reduce pollution.



Rain gardens are like regular gardens except they are designed to receive and filter stormwater. Rain gardens (WSUD's) remove pollution including litter, cigarette butts, nutrients, chemicals and sediment from stormwater before it enters our waterways.



Source: Melbourne Water 2008

For Further information contact: