

Mountain Vista Metropolitan District

What is a Bioswale and how are they maintained?

Bioswales are storm water runoff conveyance systems that provide an alternative to storm sewers. They can absorb low flows or carry runoff from heavy rains to storm sewer inlets or directly to surface waters.



You have probably noticed that between your house and the street there is no curb and gutter design. These areas are called “bioswales”. (See image to the left)

This area is maintained by the Mountain Vista Metropolitan District and not the responsibility of the Home Owner (or tenant).

Some Common Questions

Why did the Land Developer build bioswales instead of curb and gutter?

A: The City of Colorado Springs requires that to protect public and private improvements from damage that all storm water be conveyed from streets, homes, driveways, etc. to local public drainage systems. The developer’s engineers designed these bioswales to be part of that system and the City approved the design. The developer was interested in trying a different streetscape look in this area and creating an environmentally sensitive improvement that allows the water to recharge into the ground.

Is the Bioswale on my property?

A: The swale is either in the City Road right of way (owned by the City), or in an easement granted for bioswale. The easement grants a right for this improvement to be on your private property. The City required that the Mountain Vista Metropolitan District be responsible for maintenance.

What is the bioswale there for?

A: The swale is a replacement for curb and gutter, it is designed to direct storm water runoff for collection and either absorb it into the ground or convey it to the detention ponds in the neighborhood.

What is the District’s responsibility?

A: The District has the responsibility for making sure the stormwater conveyance capacity is maintained as designed. This includes keeping pipe inlets operating and making sure water can flow to the pipe and into the ground as designed.

What is my responsibility as a Homeowner (or tenant)?

A: If you see damage done to your bioswale please reach out to the District so we can fix any damage and help keep the drainage system operating properly. Be sure to report any drain covers that are damaged so the District can repair those in a timely manner.

What is the Maintenance schedule?

A: Since the District took over landscape maintenance for Filing 3 and 4 in early 2020 to present, the contracted schedule was to maintain these areas on a Time and Material basis. This also includes a 1-2 times per month weed spray and mow of native grasses (depending on weather effect on growth).

A: As the District has learned more about the operations of the bioswales, the District is going to increase maintenance on these areas in the summer to help eliminate weed growth and keep the bioswales clear of debris to help them function as they are intended.

What are my options as a Homeowner (or tenant) to help maintain them better?

A: The District recognizes that these swales are effectively part of your front yard landscape for your home and each homeowner has their own plan and sensibilities for the aesthetic of their front yard. The District allows homeowners to do some of their own maintenance in these areas with the following guidelines:

- 1** – You may pull the weeds or spray weed killer. If you spray weed killer be sure to NOT spray the native grass growing and restrict your activity to the rock area. The native grass serves a purpose to the drainage design.
- 2** – If you would like to replace the limited grass area, please let us know in writing and utilize 2-4" blue gray river rock.

What is the Parking Restrictions?

A: DO NOT park on these bioswales as it can cause early erosion that can affect the operations and design of the bioswales.

General Operation of Bioswale

