

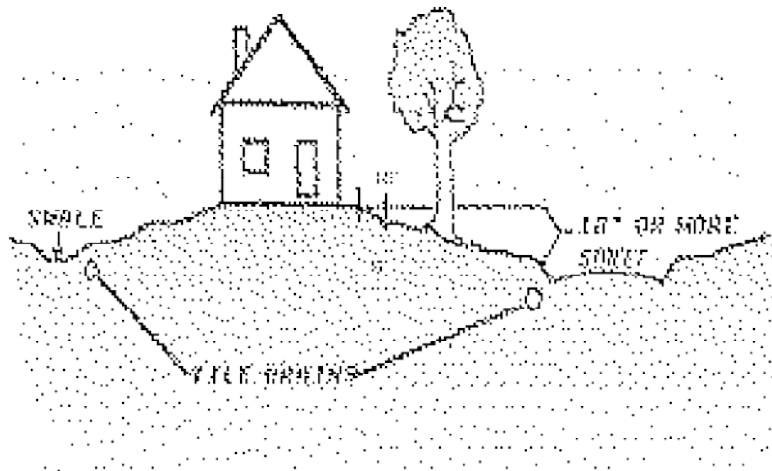


*What to do about....*

## Surface Drainage Around Your Home

If you live in Marion County and have drainage problems, you are not alone. Many of the soil types in this county have a high, seasonally perched groundwater table and in many areas, the topography is fairly flat which slows the surface drainage of stormwater. Often improving surface drainage around the home will help alleviate many of your drainage problems.

If you are planning to build a home, consider building the house one block higher than “usual”. This is often enough to provide an adequate slope away from the foundation. You optimally want to see at least 6 inches of fall away from the foundation within the first 10 feet. After settling, there may appear low spots along the foundation which you will want to be watching for - - fill in and re-grade as needed.



Gutters and downspouts are a “must” for every home. Downspouts should be extended out at least 10 feet away from the foundation to improve drainage. Keep gutters clean to keep them from overflowing. Water from sump pumps should also be taken at least 10 feet away from the foundation to keep from re-circulating the same water.

Rain gardens are a helpful and aesthetically pleasing way to do your part to decrease flooding, drainage problems, and pollution. Rain gardens are areas planted to wildflowers and other native plants that soak up rain water. Downspouts and surface drainage from

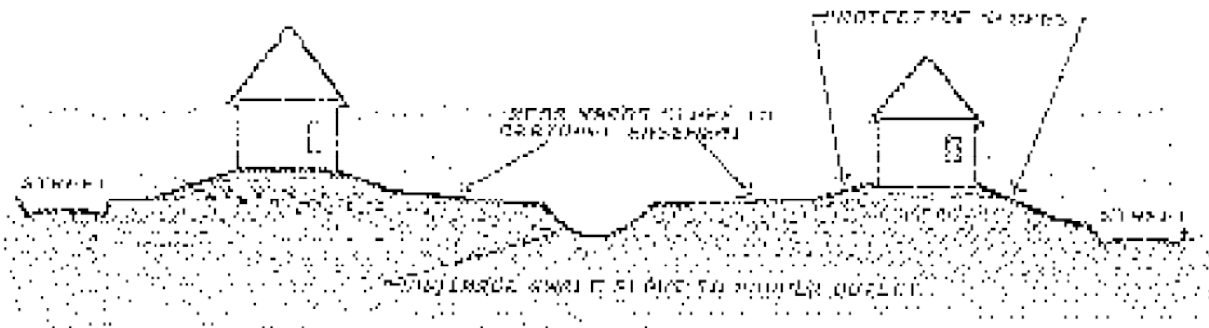
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**For more information contact the Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District  
(317)786-1776      [www.marionswcd.org](http://www.marionswcd.org)**

impervious areas are directed toward the rain gardens which collect the surface water and slowly filter it into the ground. A rain garden allows about 30% more water to soak into the ground than a conventional patch of lawn. This helps to recharge the local aquifer, decrease flooding, and filter pollutants such as fertilizer, pesticides and automobile fluids.

Rain gardens should be located at least 10 feet away from your home's foundation and should not be placed over a septic system. Rain gardens do best in full or partial sun and should not be placed where water already ponds as the goal is for the water to percolate down through the soil. You can find more information on rain gardens at this website: [www.raingardennetwork.com](http://www.raingardennetwork.com) Check the Rain Gardens fact sheet on our website [www.marionswcd.org](http://www.marionswcd.org).

Yards should be graded so that surface water will flow to a proper outlet such as a stream or storm sewer. This is most easily accomplished by grading yards toward side and backyard swales. In older neighborhoods, neighbors may need to work together to divert surface water to a proper outlet. Swales should be constructed with at least 1% grade and 4:1 side-slopes so they can be mowed easily. Nothing should be built over a swale (such as a shed or privacy fence) which would obstruct the drainage.



If after correcting surface drainage problems, you are still experiencing water problems related to your home itself, subsurface drainage improvements may be necessary. For more information on surface and subsurface drainage in urban areas refer to Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District's booklet *Building With the Land*, available from the SWCD office. Contact the office by phoning 317-786-1776 or visiting their web site at [www.marionswcd.org](http://www.marionswcd.org). The office is located at 1200 Madison Ave. Suite 200, Indianapolis, IN 46225.