

Overland Flow



Disconnected Downspout



New Commercial Landscape Requirements: INNOVATIVE WATER MANAGEMENT

Rainwater Harvesting



Rain Garden



The new ordinance has the potential to:

- Reduce long-term water costs
- Enable landscapes to qualify for water quality credit
- Qualify for LEED/Green Building credit
- Provide more attractive, sustainable landscapes

For additional information that includes potential challenges and solutions, visit: www.austintexas.gov/department/stormwater-management



Since the 1980's Austin has required landscaping of commercial areas for aesthetic, buffering, screening, and urban heat island abatement. Traditionally, this landscaping has relied on potable water irrigation. The new (2010) ordinance requires techniques that better direct stormwater to vegetated areas in order to:

- Use rainwater wisely
- Conserve potable water
- Help improve water quality

Ordinance:

The new ordinance requires commercial properties to:

- Direct stormwater to at least 50% of the required landscaping (Undisturbed natural areas or undisturbed existing trees can count toward the 50% requirement as long as no potable water is used to maintain)



Natural area



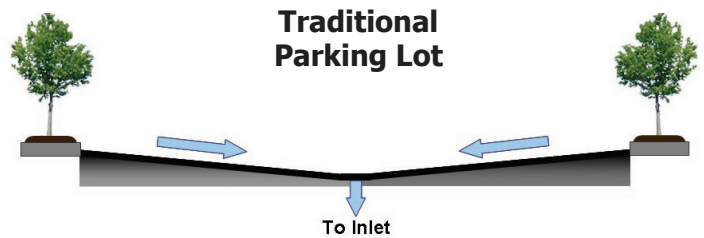
Stormwater Redirect

- Irrigate efficiently
 - Irrigation systems (e.g., potable) are required for all newly planted trees
 - Irrigation systems (e.g., potable) are required for all other newly planted landscaping, unless certain conditions are met (e.g. receiving stormwater runoff, drought tolerant plant palette, low foot-traffic areas)
 - Temporary irrigation is required for two growing seasons for areas not permanently irrigated

There are no requirements (including irrigation) for areas where existing, undisturbed vegetation is retained.

Potential Solutions:

- Direct overland stormwater flow to recessed landscaped areas



- Create a raingarden -- a shallow, vegetated depression designed to absorb and filter runoff from impervious surfaces (www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Watershed/growgreen/raingarden_factsheet.pdf)
- Direct gutter downspouts to vegetated areas
- Capture rainwater in cisterns



Landscapes may double as water quality controls if designed to City Criteria