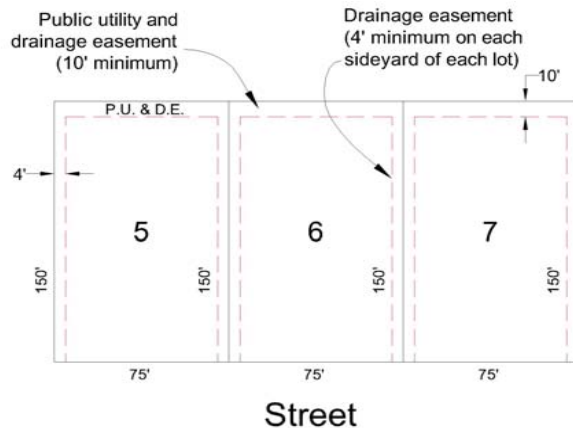


What is a Drainage Easement?

A “Drainage Easement” is a dedicated portion of property reserved for the exclusive use of stormwater conveyance. Drainage easements are typically located along the rear property lines and more recent development includes easements along side property lines.

All land that is developed within the jurisdiction of the Village of Addison shall be improved with certain public improvements. One such required public improvement is the drainage easement. Drainage easements are required to be dedicated across the rear yard with a minimum width of 10 feet, and along each side yard with a minimum width of 4 feet.



Property owners retain ownership of the land encompassed by drainage easements, although they are restricted from building permanent structures and revising the grading that may impede, obstruct, or reduce the flow of stormwater in these areas.

Purpose of Drainage Easements

Drainage Easements are used as restricted pathways that allow stormwater to flow across lots

to a storm sewer inlet, detention basin, or other drainage way.

When it rains the water typically gets absorbed or it runs off. However, when a subdivision is developed the natural flow of water is disrupted. The paving of streets, sidewalks, patios, and driveways, as well as the construction of homes leave much less surface area for the water to soak into the ground. Additionally, natural drainage courses for runoff may be obstructed and thus, new ones must be created.

Another required public improvement with new development is the drainage system, which may include swales, storm sewers, and retention or detention ponds. Drainage swales, which are “V” or “U” shaped channels, are constructed within the drainage easements during the development of the property as a means to transport water away from improved areas to larger drainage systems. Provided that drainage easements are designed to convey water, they will remain wet for a longer period of time than other parts of your yard, particularly after a heavy rainfall. It is imperative that the drainage easements remain unobstructed to allow the free flow of runoff to stormwater facilities.

Property damage may occur if runoff is not allowed to reach a stormwater facility. A legal obligation also accompanies the existence of a drainage easement. It is the responsibility of the property owner to ensure that drainage easements are not altered and to keep drainage easements clear of all obstructions.

Rear Yard Drainage and Flooding

The Village’s Stormwater Management plan utilizes detention and retention ponds, storm

sewers, roadside ditches, and swales to alleviate local flooding problems. Swales within drainage easements are a significant component for managing stormwater runoff and providing flood protection to all residents of our community.

Over the years, some residents have improperly filled their rear yards and drainage easements with dirt, trees, shrubs, gardens, ponds, compost piles, sheds, garages, and other obstructions that block the drainage route for the stormwater. The drainage easements are intended to remain open to allow stormwater to drain through rear and side yards to a designated storm sewer or detention basin.

Many rear yard drainage and flooding issues in your yard or your neighbor’s yards may be alleviated by removing obstructions currently within the drainage easement.

If you are in the process of planning new construction within the Village or have questions about existing Drainage Easements, you can get more information by contacting the:



Q & A

What can I do within this easement?

These areas should ideally remain grassed. Landscaping and gardens are allowed, but no soil, landscape timbers, or other border materials may be placed that alter the grade.

How do I know if I have a Drainage Easement on my Property?

In order to determine if a drainage easement is located on your property you should refer to your plat of survey. There are several types of easements that may be recorded on a property, with different abbreviations. The following are some common easement abbreviations:

- D.E. – Drainage Easement
- U.E. – Utility Easement
- P.U. & D.E. – Public Utility & Drainage Easement

Alternatively, you may contact the Village of Addison Engineering Division or the County Recorders Office to find out.

Can I fill in the ditch along my rear property line?

No. The drainage swales on your lot were constructed as part of an overall drainage plan to allow stormwater to flow to designated storm facilities (e.g. storm sewers, detention basins).

No changes to the grade within a drainage easement will be allowed. Drainage Easements are for the passage of surface water and it is the responsibility of the property owner to maintain the surface drainage system across their property. Altering the grade may not only affect your property, but also your neighbors.

What can I do to help maintain the integrity of the drainage easement?

- Keep all drainage easements grassed and free of debris/trash.
- Do not place permanent or temporary structures within the easement. These items may include, but are not limited to: detached garages, sheds, compost bins, patios, landscaping features, walls, etc.
- Do not place yard waste (grass clippings, leaves, branches), firewood, or pet waste in the easement.
- If you observe neighbors constructing or placing items in a drainage easement please contact the Village.

Guide to DRAINAGE EASEMENTS

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