



Doing our Part.....

Impervious surfaces - clean'em / catch'em / replace'em

Most of you know that the majority of contaminants and sediment enter our lake during heavy rain events. As discussed in Lawn Care, a healthy lawn or other vegetation is capable of stopping and filtering this runoff during the most of the year. Unlike your lawn though, the rest of your property is likely covered with impervious surfaces (such as your driveway, sidewalks, patios and roofs). These surfaces will immediately transport rain and contaminants in whatever direction gravity takes them, likely to a ditch, drain or the lake itself. We obviously can't totally eliminate all of these surfaces, but there are things we can do. First, remember to clean up any fertilizer, lawn waste, gas and oil or other contaminants that are on one of these surfaces. These will be the first to runoff into the lake. Second, consider catching or slowing the runoff from these surfaces. Several methods are available, such as rain barrels and rain gardens. Rain barrels (such as the ones offered by CLA last year) are very effective in catching and storing rain water for reuse, and even their overflow during a deluge is often diverted and slowed. Rain gardens (such as the demonstration garden over at Long Point Park) are also effective in holding diverted runoff until the ground can naturally filter the water, they also can be very attractive additions to your landscaping. Other forms of berms and vegetative barriers can also be effective in containing the runoff. Finally, if you are considering adding or replacing surfaces, think about using pervious material. Pervious materials range from a simple gravel for driveways and parking areas, to wooden stairs and decks (over a gravel base), to beautifully designed paver walkways and patios (make sure the barrier cloth underneath is pervious). I recently saw a lovely driveway that combined sturdy pavers with lawn growing in-between. As you can see there are many ways to protect our lake from these surfaces.



Newly planted rain garden at Long Point Park, Town of Geneseo.

(Examples of rain barrels, rain gardens, and pervious surfaces)

[More info on a rain garden](#)