

# Contact Us

---

The Kent County Drain Commissioner's Office *encourages* residents to report anyone altering or dumping waste into waterways, easements, or drains so appropriate legal action can be taken.



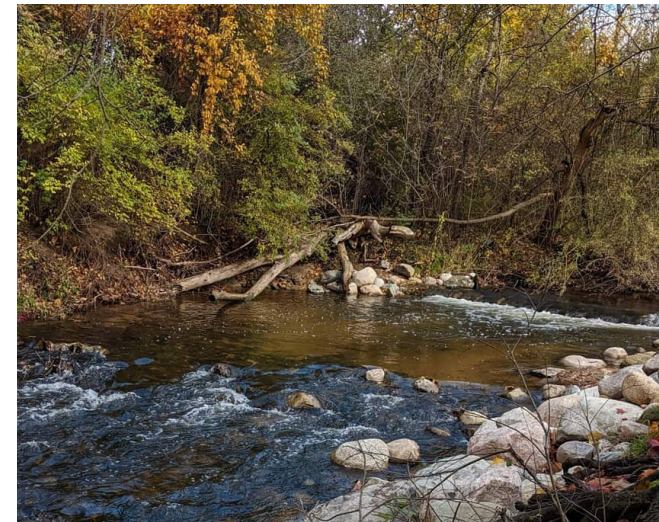
775 Ball Ave. NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

---

Phone: 616-632-7910  
Email: [DRinfo@kentcountymi.gov](mailto:DRinfo@kentcountymi.gov)

Kent County Drain Commissioner's Office  
775 Ball Ave. NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

# REMINDER TO RESIDENTS



## KEEP DRAINS, EASEMENTS, AND WATERWAYS CLEAR

---

When it rains, it drains.

## WHAT IS A COUNTY DRAIN?

A county drain may be an open ditch, stream, underground pipe, retention pond, or swale that conveys stormwater. Not all drains are County Drains. Natural watercourses are under the jurisdiction of the State Inland Lakes and Streams. Most roadside ditches are under the jurisdiction of the Road Commission, but some along the road are County Drains.

---

## ILLEGAL DUMPING COSTS MILLIONS



**REMINDER: Dumping yard waste and household refuse in local waterways, easements, and drains increases the risk of severe flooding and harms sensitive aquatic ecosystems.**

---

## LANDOWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

In an effort to reduce flooding, local water pollution, and costs to homeowners we ask for your help in keeping Kent County Flowing. Drains not properly cared for by property owners increases the cost of maintenance to the County Drain Commissioner's Office which is assessed directly back to the property owner(s).

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- Routine grounds maintenance such as mowing, brushing, and trash/debris removal. Ensure that drain systems and structures are kept free of yard waste (grass clippings, tree trimmings, leaves, etc.) or other obstructions that may block the flow of water.
- Reducing tree, shrub, and other growth within an easement.
- Driveway crossings and bridges need to be kept free of debris and maintained to prevent banks from eroding into the watercourse.
- Keep yard drains/catch basins free of debris before and after storm events.
- Keep drains and drainage easements easily accessible for maintenance and inspections
- **DO NOT** remove stumps, root masses, or trees on banks. Removal causes extreme erosion
- **DO NOT** apply pesticides and fertilizers several days before rain is forecasted. Use sparingly and always follow directions. Rain storms wash off the application and carry into waterways.
- **NEVER** dump pet waste, motor oil, paint chemicals, or other substances into a storm drain. Information about proper disposal of household hazardous waste is available at **Kent County Public Works (616)632-7920**

## WHAT IS AN EASEMENT?

Drainage easements are obtained for specific uses such as stormwater conveyance, stormwater detention, ponding, floodplain, or as access routes for operating, maintaining, or repairing county drains. Easement Widths vary from drain to drain depending on the drain's size and type. Some easements are of an unspecified width.

## EASEMENT POLICY

- Drainage Easements are not to be considered public areas and are not open to the public.
- Property owners retain ownership but are restricted from building permanent structures that may interfere with or reduce drainage and/or temporary storage capacity. You may not impede on drain maintenance of surface or subsurface systems within the easement area. This includes swimming pools, patios/decks, fences, sheds/garages, etc.
- Easements obtained prior to 1956 were not required by law to be recorded with the County Register of Deed's Office and are considered properly recorded if they are on file in the County Water Resources Commissioner's Office. Easements Obtained after 1956 are required to be recorded at the Register of Deed's Office and are also on file at the Drain Commissioner's Office. **Check with both offices to determine if a drainage easement exists on your property.**
- No changes to the grade within a drainage easement will be allowed. Easements are for the passage of surface drainage and it is a property owner's responsibility to maintain the drainage system across their property. Altering the grade can severely impact drainage.