

MANAGING COSTS

PLANNING & BUDGETING FOR MAINTENANCE



Key Maintenance Activities

While requirements vary between practices and cities, your green infrastructure requires regular maintenance. **Your HOA should hire a professional to address common tasks:**

- Inspect the practice once every six months and at least once annually, during or immediately after a significant rainfall to ensure proper function.
- Remove invasive or competitive species, prune, and/or replant as needed.
- Remove sediment, trash, and debris from storage areas, piping, and other structures.
- Repair eroded areas.
- Replace broken piping, inlets, outlets, etc.

Stormwater ponds must also be dredged to remove the accumulated sediment in the pool. While this occurs less frequently, it is also much more costly than routine maintenance. **As the owner of the infrastructure, your HOA bears the financial responsibility of maintenance and repairs.**

Estimated Maintenance Costs

The cost to maintain your stormwater infrastructure could vary significantly based on the type and size of the systems you have. A routine annual inspection will help you understand your maintenance needs and avoid expensive maintenance issues down the road. Typically, a raingarden will need \$100 to \$1,000 of maintenance every couple of years, while a large pond system may require \$50,000 or more every 15 or 20 years for pond dredging, in addition to annual maintenance. **Speaking with a professional contractor, having a good maintenance plan, and keeping maintenance records are the best way to budget for these expenses.**



How to Plan & Budget

Creating a maintenance plan is essential for your HOA to ensure the long-term function of green stormwater practices.

To get started:

- **Retrieve copies of all site documents** from city hall/city engineer/zoning official including:
 - Maintenance agreements
 - Site plan or project review documents or permits
 - Protected wetland edges
 - Construction plans
 - As-builts (show how construction changed from the plan)
- **Create a written maintenance plan for each practice** to ensure consistency and clarity during board turnover and provide a record of which entity is responsible for each task. Include:
 - Contact info for current and previous owners and managers
 - Contact info for city, watershed, and other pertinent staff
 - Contact info for any companies providing service or maintenance
 - Copies of any current service or maintenance contracts.
 - An inventory of your features and facilities, including photos
 - A list of legal maintenance requirements identified in documents or discussions
- **Develop a maintenance and inspection checklist** for tracking your activities consistently and helping train staff.
 - Example visual inspection checklists can be found at: stormwaterbook.safl.umn.edu
- **Write a short job description** for each task and **designate** whose responsibility it is.
 - Establish contracts for tasks requiring professional expertise.
- **Share pertinent information** with HOA board members and residents.
- **Be realistic** about your maintenance costs, and **create a budget**.
 - Include annual maintenance costs for all practices on the property.
 - Contribute annually to a long-term fund such as a pond maintenance fund that will cover dredging when the time comes, as well as occasional repairs.



Visit mnwcd.org/hoa-stormwater-tools for more information and resources.

Reach out to your city to get the needed documents to begin a maintenance plan

