

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

### *Creek property owners --*

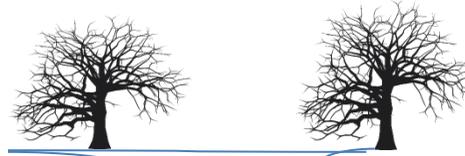
- Don't leave landscape trimmings, mulch or any floating materials in the floodway.
- Remove debris in the creek, regardless of where it came from.
- Trim streambank trees and bushes so branches don't hang into creek. Remove loose or dead branches before they fall into the creek.
- Remove invasive buckthorn, honeysuckle, purple loosestrife and other non-native plants and replace with native deep-rooted shrubs and grasses that help stabilize banks. Contact the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission for suggestions on suitable plants – [www.phnrc.com](http://www.phnrc.com).
- Report any large blockages to the PH Public Works Dept, 847-398-6070 x 207, or to Metropolitan Water Reclamation District's Small Streams Maintenance Crew (go to <https://gispub.mwrd.org/ssmp/main.html> to report online.)

### *Other residents --*

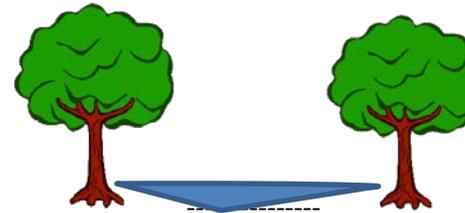
- Keep swales and driveway culverts clear of debris. Swales provide drainage for your property and for the road, and detention during heavy rainfalls.
- Reduce fertilizer use on lawns. Only use phosphorus if soil tests indicate it's needed.
- Use less salt on driveways and sidewalks during winter months.
- Install rain gardens or rain barrels to reduce storm water runoff. MWRD offers rain barrels for \$45.
- Direct water from downspouts into your lawn or garden, not swales.
- Manage your yard as part of the green infrastructure network. Let rainwater soak in where it falls to reduce runoff to the creek and to recharge groundwater, which supplies your well.
- Find comprehensive information on storm water management under Community on the city website: [www.prospect-heights.il.us](http://www.prospect-heights.il.us).

## PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS

### *Overhanging branches, trees within banks*



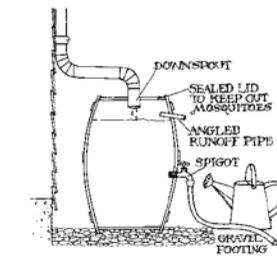
*Trim & remove trees. Follow this rule of thumb: If you can't walk under it, trim it.*



### *Flooding due to runoff from roofs & roads*



*Keep storm water on your property. Route downspouts onto lawn or garden. Install rain gardens. Use rain barrels.*



*at Country Gardens Park*

## About McDonald Creek

McDonald Creek begins just east of Route 53 near Dundee Road and flows generally southeast through Arlington Heights, Wheeling, Prospect Heights and Mount Prospect until it joins the Des Plaines River just south of Kensington Road.

The 10-square-mile watershed includes North and South branches that meet at Lake Arlington to form the main channel, plus two tributaries. Tributary A runs a little more than a mile from Old Orchard Country Club through the slough and Hillcrest Lake to its confluence with the main stream in Walnut Woods, at Palatine and Wheeling roads. Tributary B flows east from Wheeling Road parallel to Euclid Avenue for one mile, through Rob Roy Golf Course and Woodland Trails Park. The main channel runs approximately 6 miles, of which 4 miles lies within the City of Prospect Heights.

## How McDonald Creek Helps You

McDonald Creek is a vital component of city infrastructure. Prospect Heights does not have a storm sewer system, so the creek and its tributaries are the sole source of surface drainage for 85% of the city, including all land west of Wolf Road. The creek also enhances the rural character of the city, helps recharge the aquifer upon which our wells depend, provides habitat and corridors for wildlife, and is a recreational corridor.

## How You Can Help McDonald Creek

Regular maintenance is needed to keep our storm water infrastructure operating properly. Blockages, overgrown vegetation, fallen trees, trash, streambank erosion and excess siltation all contribute to impaired drainage and potential flooding problems. So do broken or blocked culvert pipes under driveways and poorly maintained ditches and swales. Several city codes address the waterway maintenance responsibilities of residents and the city.

### City Code: Applicable Ordinances

*Title 3 – Health & Sanitation:* Forbids the pollution or obstruction of any waterway

*Title 4, Ch. 7 – Soil Erosion & Sedimentation Control:* Regulates all earth moving activities to prevent soil erosion and resulting sediment from being deposited in swales or in the creek.

*Title 4-7, Article B - Preservation of Drainage and Waterways:* Forbids disposal of trash or yard waste in swales, in the creek or in the floodplain; also lists recorded easements

*Title 7 – Flood Control:* Regulates all activities within the defined floodplain

*Title 8 – Roadways, Ditches, Swales:* Regulates filling or altering swales, sump pump and downspout discharges, and city's right to correct improper drainage

Volunteer creek committees have monitored and maintained McDonald Creek since 1938. The current McDonald Creek Commission was established by the City Council in December 2016 as an advisory group with five appointed commissioners tasked with monitoring watershed conditions and educating residents about creek maintenance. The Commission meets at 6 pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month in City Hall. Any interested resident is welcome. Reach us at [McDonaldCreekCommission@prospect-heights.org](mailto:McDonaldCreekCommission@prospect-heights.org).

*Clearing trash is one way residents of all ages can help maintain McDonald Creek.*



*Coming soon - Clear the Creek workdays sponsored by the McDonald Creek Commission. Watch for details.*

## Stream Maintenance

**Normal Flow** - The normal creek water level is 6-10" deep. Normal current is slow. Small floating twigs and leaves will be caught by small obstructions. Light vegetation (small plants and grasses) yield to water flow and bend over, actually improving flow characteristics.

**Bank Full** - During moderate to severe storms, the creek will run bank full. Flow rate increases dramatically. Water at the bottom runs faster than can be observed at the surface. Flow rates of over 4 feet per second will start to erode unprotected stream banks.

**Obstructed Flow** - Twiggy growth and trees trap debris, slowing flow at that point and causing water to back up and increase the flow around and under the obstruction. This accelerated or deflected water flow will cause erosion of the bank or the stream bed. Look upstream for the cause of a severely eroded bank. If stream depth increases suddenly, look for an obstruction causing water to accelerate underneath, thus digging out the stream bed.

**Base Flood** - The flood having a 1% probability of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The base flood is also known as the 100-year frequency flood event.

**Floodplain** - Land adjacent to a body of water with surface elevations at or below the base flood or 100-year frequency flood elevation

**Designated Floodway** - The channel and adjacent floodplain which is needed to store and convey base flood discharge with no more than 0.1 foot increase in stage and no more than a 10% increase in velocities.