



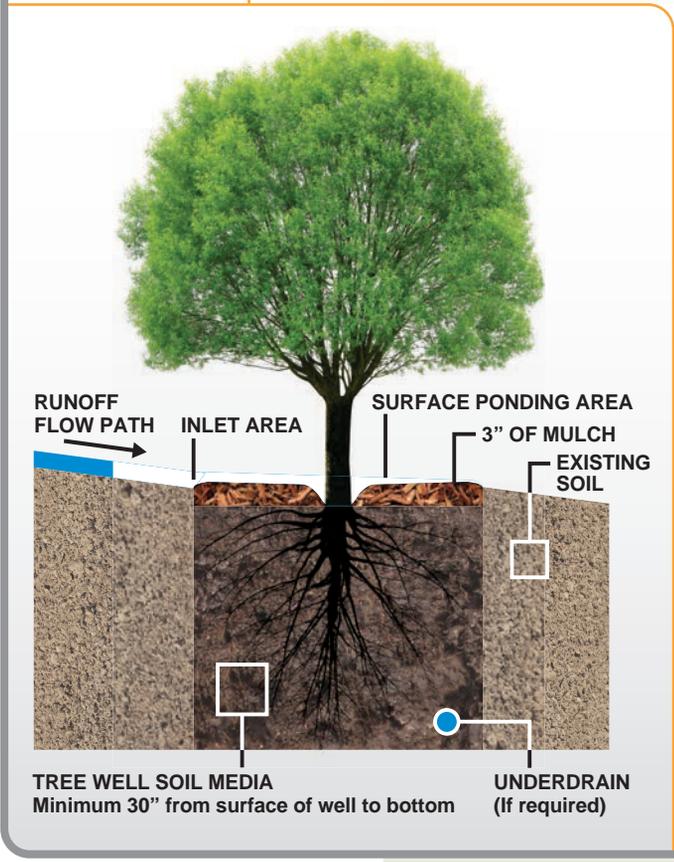
county of san diego



# tree wells

Tree Wells are a type of Significant Site Design Best Management Practice (SSD-BMP) used for managing stormwater runoff. Tree Wells are installed on certain properties across the County to help **prevent pollutants** such as trash, fertilizers, pesticides, and sediment from making their way into storm drains and ultimately to our local creeks, rivers, and ocean. Your property is one of several across the County with at least one Tree Well.

FIGURE 1 *Tree Well (Cross-Section View)*



## *Tree Wells Keep Our Waterways Clean*

Your Tree Wells are designed to remove pollutants from stormwater runoff generated by your property to the maximum extent practicable. As an owner of one of these properties, the County requests your participation by performing **routine inspections and maintenance actions** to ensure that your Tree Wells are operating effectively.



**Our records indicate that you have at least one Tree Well on your property.** To help you maintain this Tree Well, the **County of San Diego Watershed Protection Program** is providing you with this informational flyer to answer questions you may have about Tree Wells and how to maintain them.

## *How Your Tree Well Works*

Tree Wells divert stormwater runoff to the soil immediately surrounding a planted tree (see figure 1). Generally, the areas around the Tree Well are sloped to allow water to naturally flow into the Tree Well. Typically after heavy rainfall, runoff collected in the Tree Well filters through the soil removing pollutants from



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stormwater runoff. Tree Wells also reduce the volume of runoff entering the storm drain system and can prevent surface floods. Tree Wells are often found adjacent to walkways, driveways, and parking areas to capture and treat stormwater runoff flowing from these surfaces.

## Find And Maintain Your Tree Well



To find your Tree Well, look for trees where water flows to and accumulates around the base of the tree after rainfall. Tree Wells may be planted in the ground or in planter boxes and positioned along walkways, driveways, and other landscaped areas of your property.

Once you have found your Tree Well, it is important to maintain it. Keeping the Tree Well in working condition helps keep our local waterways clean. Below are a few of the maintenance tasks that may need to be performed:

- **Remove and replace any dead trees.**
- **If you see standing water for longer than 24 hours after rainfall, loosen or replace soil to promote infiltration into the soil.**
- **Remove any accumulated litter or debris obstructing the flow to the tree well and dispose of it properly.**
- **At the entrance of the tree well, or inlet area, maintain the surface depression or slope to ensure water flows into the tree well.**
- **For tree wells with mulch around the base of the tree, keep the mulch from direct contact with the tree trunk to prevent bark rot.**

For a list of other tasks, refer to the maintenance verification form or maintenance plans from your housing developer.

The Watershed Protection Program performs visual inspections of Tree Wells periodically. Failure to conduct the recommended maintenance tasks of your Tree Well may lead to a poorly operating Tree Well and may initiate a follow up inspection.

thank you for doing  
your part to

protect our  
waterways

*For Questions, Contact Us At:*

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<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/stormwater>

