

Huron Farms Detention Ponds

There have been many questions in the past year with regard to the detention ponds. This article summarizes what the Board has learned after asking the experts.

Background:

The civil engineering firm retained by Norfolk Development Company (NDC) designed each pond according to Washtenaw County Drain Commission standards. The Village of Dexter's engineering consultant then reviewed the designs. The reviewing firm both approves the design and inspects the work at the conclusion of construction. Huron Farms Association maintains the ponds through our management company. Civil engineers from the firm who designed the ponds and the firm who approved their documents were kind enough to do a courtesy review with Thom Phillips, Association president in the summer of 2005. Both engineers felt that our ponds were generally healthy.

Dry Ponds:

Most of the ponds have been designed to remain dry. This means that during a storm when water flows into the ponds through the underground pipe system, that water is slowly released through a much smaller outlet structure into the discharge area within 24 hours. Newer ponds have a fore-bay where the water initially flows to allow silt and sediment to settle out before entering the main pond. Wet ponds basically work the same way, except that their storage capacity begins at the standing water line rather than a dry lawn area.

Normal maintenance includes removal of debris and the inspection and occasional cleaning or replacement of stone at inlet and outlet structures. More detail is provided by the WCDC's model detention pond maintenance plan. Signs of a pond in need of attention (dry or wet) include water not fully draining from dry ponds, erosion of banks or around structures and exposed earth in areas that should be planted. The growth of trees, shrubs and other plants are expected and not harmful.

Wet Ponds:

One of the ponds constructed in phases 9 and 10 is a wet pond. Storm water is discharged to a fore-bay, which drains into a mitigated wetland and on into a large, wet pond. The design called for mowed grass down to the standing water line and in all common areas. Mitigated wetland is an exception and signs indicate that once established, this area is not to be mowed. NDC has a performance bond in place for the mitigated wetland area that will be released following an inspection by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality in five years.

Keep Children Away from Ponds:

Parents, do not allow your children swim or play in the ponds or adjacent areas. They are not designed for swimming. They are also an active part of the storm system and subject to sudden change. Otherwise enjoy the view!!

Algae:

Given enough circulation through the pond, algae should not be too much of a problem. However during the mid summer with little rain, some amount of algae is natural and likely.

Mosquitoes:

The larger ponds are also not typical breeding areas for mosquitoes. According to the Bay City mosquito control authority, the best areas for breeding are those that are

comparatively still and 3 inches or less in depth. Parts of the mitigated wetland, however, may fit this description.

Other Co-Owner Responsibilities:

As with other common areas, our pond's health is our responsibility and as such they are maintained by our management company, LarcArc. Because of the number and size of the ponds in our community, they remain our single greatest maintenance liability so they need to be consistently cared for. Even with LandArc's maintenance work, the support of those who live adjacent or near the ponds will benefit everyone. Please do not dump lawn clippings, compost or other lawn debris into or adjacent to the ponds. We all pay to remove such material or the silt they generate.