



In order to reduce the long-term impact of your home on your downstream neighbors, a **WATER QUALITY BUFFER** was installed when your home was constructed.

What is a Water Quality Buffer?

A Water Quality Buffer is an undisturbed natural area along a lot perimeter where development is restricted or prohibited. The primary function of the buffer is to slow surface flow and remove pollutants through vegetative filtering and absorption in the ground. The buffer may also reduce off-site erosion and provide protection to an adjacent waterbody.



How does it work?

The most effective buffers for protecting water quality are those that consist of undisturbed natural vegetation including maintaining the original tree line along the stream or channel banks when applicable. The buffer remains undisturbed to the maximum extent practical. Riparian buffers, or buffers that are next to streams, are one of the most cost-effective ways to maintain a healthy stream ecosystem. Water quality buffers are often paired with a level spreader. Level Spreaders provide temporary pooling across a slope and typically consist of a permanent structure used to disperse or spread runoff thinly into the buffer zone. Any runoff that is absorbed into the soil helps to recharge groundwater and the buffer/soil acts like a filter, removing impurities and contaminants from water. This means more water in drinking water wells and streams that can better support large populations of fish and wildlife.

Maintenance of a Water Quality Buffer with level spreader is the responsibility of the property owner. How should it be maintained?

- Ensure Water Quality Buffer boundaries are well defined and clearly marked.
- Do not rake, mulch or landscape the buffer. Minimal small brush may be removed.
- Remove invasive vegetation, if it is present and can be identified.
- Inspect the Level Spreader for visual damage and maintain Vegetated Filter Strip as directed on its reference sheet (this will be included if you have these features on your property).

The continued maintenance of your Water Quality Buffer is your responsibility in order to reduce environmental impacts and to protect those downstream. Please refer to Greenville County Land Development for more information.