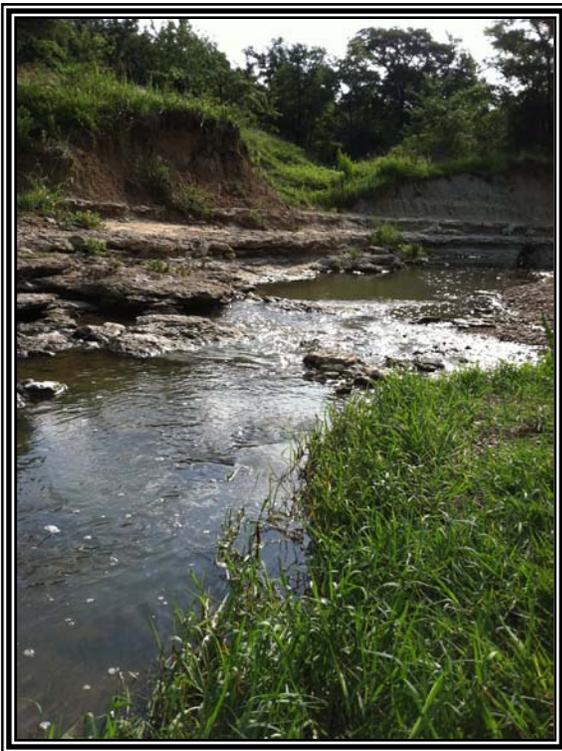




Town of Trophy Club *Creek Care Guide* *for Residents and Businesses*

In order to keep the creeks in Trophy Club healthy and vibrant, proper care and management is crucial. As residents, business owners and stewards of the community it is a shared responsibility for keeping the creeks and their corridors well-conditioned and thriving. A healthy creek promotes both a safe haven for the wildlife that depend on the waterway, as well a beautiful nature reserve for people's enjoyment.

Much of the creekside property in Trophy Club is in private ownership, which places the responsibility for the health and survival of creek-dependent wildlife with you, the creekside business or resident. Through proper care of the waterway, banks and vegetation, owners can enhance their property, prevent erosion problems, avoid flood losses, preserve water quality and help sustain the survival of the fish and wildlife that call the creeks home. Protecting creek habitats and water flows result in a healthier community overall.



Signs of a healthy creek include cool, clean water free of contaminants and excess algae along with varied flow cycles. Creek beds and banks should be stable with minimal erosion and have both slow and fast water running over shallow, rocky stretches (for fish spawning). Healthy vegetation helps stabilize banks, provides habitat for birds and small mammals and keeps the water temperature cool for fish populations. A vigorous creek is home to thriving fish, amphibians and aquatic insect populations that often find safety and food among leaves, small branches, fallen logs and other natural vegetative debris within the stream bed and along the banks. A thriving creek ecosystem contains a range of conditions and understanding how your property effects those conditions and ensuring proper care is taken will help support the overall health of the creek.

Many water ways fall victim to urban runoff from streets, storm drains and other paved surfaces. Run off from these surfaces often carry debris and pollutants

that pose significant dangers to creeks. Signs of an unhealthy creek include poor water quality, such as excessive algae, suspended sediments, animal waste and sewage contamination and the presence of metals or other toxics. High water temperatures and reduced water flow or still water with an

absence of pools, riffles or clean gravel also hurt the creek ecosystem. Additionally, loss of the natural creek channel, excessive erosion along creek banks and a high rate of sedimentation impeding stream flow can cause stress on the waterway. There should be diversity in plant life; however, invading non-native plants should not be introduced as they often compete with native plants without providing equal benefit to the creek or wildlife. A healthy creek is free of litter, yard clippings, trash and other dumped debris.

The products/byproducts listed below are harmful to creeks and proper disposal will help promote a healthy, thriving creek ecosystem:

- 🗑️ Motor oil, gasoline, battery acid, antifreeze or any other automotive fluids
- 🗑️ Paints, thinners and other solvents
- 🗑️ Water containing carpet cleaning chemicals
- 🗑️ Pet feces
- 🗑️ Car wash soaps
- 🗑️ Fats, grease, oil, detergents and food scraps
- 🗑️ Chlorine, copper algacides and other pool chemicals
- 🗑️ Limit gardening chemicals such as pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers

Other tips for maintaining a healthy creek:

- 🗑️ Clean automotive spills using “dry” cleanup methods, such as cat litter
- 🗑️ Do not allow runoff from rain gutters or roofs drain directly into the creek
- 🗑️ Control pet access to creeks to limit water contamination and wildlife threats
- 🗑️ Carefully remove trash, litter and other dumped debris from creek. Keeping materials such as old tires, garbage and litter away from the flood zone will prevent these items from becoming a hazard during a flood
- 🗑️ Keep an eye on the creek and storm drains in your neighborhood and report any abuse
- 🗑️ Cover and maintain dumpsters – leaking dumpsters cause water pollution
- 🗑️ Keep pollutants off exposed surfaces – place trash receptacles where appropriate
- 🗑️ Control parking lot and site drainage to prevent runoff from potentially contaminated surfaces – regularly clean paved surfaces
- 🗑️ Educate family members or employees on how to handle waste properly
- 🗑️ Consider using compost and organic soil alternatives instead of chemical fertilizers
- 🗑️ Dispose of yard clippings, leaves and other yard debris appropriately
- 🗑️ Landscape with native plant species that are uniquely adapted to survive flood conditions
- 🗑️ Avoid diverting water or damming creek
- 🗑️ Pave only where necessary to minimize runoff
- 🗑️ Practice water conservation
- 🗑️ Avoid removing natural debris unless it poses a serious flooding or erosion hazard
- 🗑️ Check for erosion regularly and correct problems promptly

Conscious creek care is the best erosion control and neighbors should cooperate together and share responsibility for maintaining a healthy creek. With proper attention, creeks will thrive, enhance the community and benefit the entire Town.