



SAVING LAKE TAHOE IN YOUR BACKYARD

A Property Owner's Guide to Best Management Practices (BMPs)



YOU CAN SAVE LAKE TAHOE!

Lake Tahoe is world renowned for its exceptional clarity. Unfortunately, the clarity of Lake Tahoe is declining at an alarming rate of over one foot each year. The loss of clarity is due largely to soil erosion and surface runoff associated with the development of urban areas in the Tahoe Basin.

In an undisturbed watershed, the majority of stormwater is absorbed and filtered through the soil. When a watershed is disturbed and covered with impervious surfaces such as roads, driveways and rooftops, the rain and snowmelt flush pollutants quickly into the nearest stream, ultimately ending up in Lake Tahoe. Once in Lake Tahoe, the sediment causes the water to appear muddy and the nutrients feed algae growth.

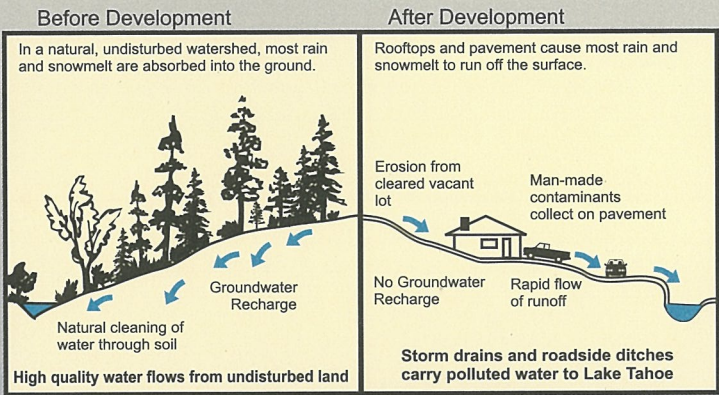
Fortunately, there are a few easy things that you, as a homeowner, can do that will not only help stop Lake Tahoe's clarity loss, but will also increase the property value of your home. These lake-saving steps are called Best Management Practices, or BMPs.



Photo: © E. G. Hagadorn

After a major rainstorm, tons of sediment and nutrients flush into Lake Tahoe from the Upper Truckee River.

Development alters the natural flow pattern of rain and snowmelt creating excessive, polluted runoff.



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WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT TASK FORCE:

A multi-agency partnership has been established to specifically assist private landowners with the design and implementation of Best Management Practices. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Nevada Tahoe Conservation District and the Tahoe Resource Conservation District provide free quality technical assistance to facilitate the implementation of BMPs to preserve water quality and the clarity of Lake Tahoe.

This brochure is designed to help you understand what BMPs are, why they are required by TRPA, and where you can get assistance implementing BMPs on your property.

WHAT ARE BMPs AND HOW CAN THEY HELP SAVE LAKE TAHOE?

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are proven methods that prevent sediment and nutrients from entering our surface waters. By implementing BMPs, all property owners can help slow or reverse the loss of lake clarity.

BMPs prescribed for residential properties may include:

- Paving dirt driveways and roads,
- Infiltrating stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces,
- Stabilizing or retaining steep slopes and loose soils,
- Vegetating and mulching bare soils.

According to the recently published *Lake Tahoe Watershed Assessment*, scientists have determined that implementing BMPs on existing development is one of the most critical steps toward improving water quality.

The following pictures show examples of a few BMPs that may be prescribed. Erosion control specialists will work closely with you to implement the most effective plan for your property. BMPs can aesthetically improve your landscaping while stopping erosion.



Photo: © B. Ferry

Slotted drains on a paved driveway capture runoff and carry it to a gravel-filled drywell, where it is infiltrated.

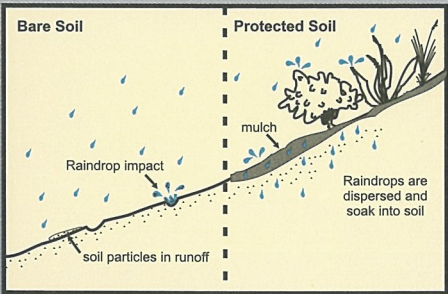


Photo: © S. Sparks

Stormwater runoff from a roof is stored in a gravel-filled trench that filters the stormwater through the soil instead of letting it collect and run off the property.

WHO TO CALL:

- California-Residential:** Tahoe Resource Conservation District, (530) 543-1501 ext. 6
Nevada-Residential: Nevada Tahoe Conservation District, (775) 586-1610 ext. 28
Commercial & Multi-family Properties: TRPA's Erosion Control Team, (775) 588-4547 ext. 202



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Mulching and vegetating soils help the soil to absorb rain and snowmelt like a sponge, mimicking natural conditions.



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Photo and Landscaping by S. Kreveld

This slope is stabilized beautifully with native vegetation and rock. Steeper slopes may require wood or rock retaining walls, terraces or other methods that add stability.

SAVING LAKE TAHOE IS EASY

TRPA's Erosion Control Team, the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, the Nevada Tahoe Conservation District, the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and the Natural Resources Conservation Service are working collaboratively to assist property owners with the implementation of BMPs. To bring your property into compliance and help improve Lake Tahoe's clarity, follow these easy steps:

STEP 1: BMP SITE EVALUATION

Request a free BMP site evaluation by completing the pre-paid reply card enclosed in this brochure and dropping it in the mail. You may also request a BMP site evaluation by contacting the Tahoe Resource Conservation District at (530) 543-1501 ext. 6 for residential properties in California, or the Nevada Tahoe Conservation District at (775) 586-7223 ext. 1 for residential properties in Nevada.

STEP 2: BMP IMPLEMENTATION

You will receive a copy of the completed BMP site evaluation in the mail. You can then install the BMPs yourself, hire a qualified contractor to do the work or request additional assistance from the Conservation Districts.

STEP 3: CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

When the BMPs are completed, contact TRPA's Erosion Control Team at (775) 588-4547 ext. 202 for a final inspection. If the BMPs have been installed as prescribed, you will receive a Certificate of Completion. This signifies that the property is in compliance with the TRPA BMP Retrofit Program. The Certificate will be valid as long as the BMPs are maintained and functioning properly. **To check on the status of a property, please visit the BMP Database at www.tahoebmp.org.**

If you are interested in receiving a free BMP site evaluation and a complimentary copy of the *Home Landscaping Guide for Tahoe and Vicinity*, please fill out the following information and return the pre-paid postcard in the mail.

The *Home Landscaping Guide for Lake Tahoe and Vicinity* is an informative book written by the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension that explains how you can have a beautiful landscape while protecting Lake Tahoe.



Return me now for your free BMP site evaluation & *Home Landscaping Guide for Lake Tahoe and Vicinity*!

* Property Owner Name: _____

* Property Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

* Mailing Address: _____

Street or PO Box: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

* Do you wish to be present for site evaluation, (not required)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments: _____

We will contact you to confirm the receipt of this request.

* Indicates required fields



Photo: © M. Boccuzzi

After implementing BMPs,
you will receive a Certificate
of Completion.



Photo: © M. Graham

BMP prescriptions are based
on site characteristics such as
soil drainage, slope and
existing vegetation.



This brochure was printed on treeless
paper using vegetable-based inks.

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BEGIN THE BMP PROCESS EARLY

Property owners are encouraged to begin the BMP process early. **All properties** in the Tahoe Basin are required to have BMPs installed. Lake Tahoe properties are located within a Priority One, Two or Three watershed. The compliance dates are as follows: October 15, 2000 for Priority One, October 15, 2006 for Priority Two and October 15, 2008 for Priority Three. (If your home is located in a Priority One watershed, please call as soon as possible.) BMP site evaluations will be completed at no charge until October 15, 2006. Corrective action, including monetary penalties, will be taken when necessary against property owners who have not complied with the BMP Retrofit Program by their designated compliance date. To determine which Priority Watershed your property is located within, please visit the BMP Database at www.tahoebmp.org or www.tiims.org, or refer to Step 1 in the section entitled, "Saving Lake Tahoe Is Easy."

DEFENSIBLE SPACE: Reduce Wildfire Risks

Homeowners should address the need for both BMPs and defensible space in an integrated fashion. Defensible space is the area around a house where the vegetation has been modified to reduce the wildfire risk and to provide an opportunity for firefighters to effectively defend the house. Sometimes, defensible space is simply a homeowner's properly maintained backyard. Contact your local fire department for more information.

- North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District: **(775) 831-0351**
- Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District: **(775) 588-3591**
- City of South Lake Tahoe Fire Department: **(530) 542-6160**
- Lake Valley Fire Protection District: **(530) 577-3737**
- Fallen Leaf Fire Department: **(530) 525-1343**
- Meeks Bay Fire Protection District: **(530) 525-7548**
- North Tahoe Fire Protection District: **(530) 583-6913**

The BMP Retrofit Program is a cooperative effort of the following agencies: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region; Nevada Division of Environmental Protection; Nevada Division of State Lands; Tahoe Resource Conservation District; Nevada Tahoe Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service.

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