



Where does all the water go after it rains?

Pathway to Water Quality is a beautiful park-like exhibit at

the Indiana State Fairgrounds that showcases the importance of soil and water conservation. The almost one-acre vista is a model watershed showing how land “sheds” water or drains to a common place such as a river, lake, stream, marsh or groundwater.

We all live in a watershed.



The exhibit debuted in 1992 at the Farm Progress Show and was permanently moved to the Indiana State Fairgrounds in 1993 to provide

a “path” that explains how soil and water play such an important role in our everyday life. Pathway to Water Quality helps people understand the connection between healthy soils and clean water, why it is important, and what we can do at home, in business, and on the farm to protect our soil and water quality!

Located next to the Boy Scout Legacy Bridge, Pathway is an attractive natural area for fairgoers and tours. The exhibit includes practical information for anyone who uses the land.

Why is this connection between soil and water so important?

- Last night you slept in a building built on soil.
- Your vegetables are grown in the soil.
- You drink water that flows through soil and is cleaned by the soil.
- You breathe air that comes from plants growing in the soil.
- You even wear clothes made from plants that grow in the soil.

Soil and water make our lives possible. We all want to drink, bathe and swim in clean water. We play on soil, drive on soil, eat food grown in or raised on soil, and take medicines from soil. The entire earth — every ecosystem, every living organism — is dependent upon healthy soils and clean water.

More about our conservation story

Pathway to Water Quality is sponsored by the eight state organizations and agencies who make up the Indiana Conservation Partnership



The education area at Pathway offers many conservation activities, games and projects for youth.

(ICP) with financial assistance from the Indiana State Fairgrounds. For more about the partnership visit icp.iaswcd.org. Volunteers from these groups maintain the exhibit and educate visitors about conservation practices.

The exhibit is open during the 17 days of the Indiana State Fair and for educational tours. Follow the path through this outdoor exhibit and discover how you can become a better caretaker of our natural resources!

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1. **Green Roof:** This structure is covered with vegetation and a growing medium. It is planted over a water proof membrane. The roof absorbs rainwater, provides insulation, and creates habitat for wildlife.
2. **Rain Barrel:** There are 4 rain barrels located throughout PWQ. A barrel is placed below a downspout to collect and store rain water to be used to water plants.
3. **Rock Waterfall:** Tumbling water mixes oxygen into streams, improving habitat for aquatic life.
4. **Pervious Concrete:** This type of concrete allows water to filter through instead of running off. Trapped water is cleaned before reaching groundwater supplies. This path extends around PWQ.
5. **Native Plants:** Plants and flowers native to Indiana are grown throughout Pathway because they grow better, have less disease, and require less water and fertilizer.
6. **Model Home:** This area showcases native plants, trees, composting, a rain barrel and rain garden, raised bed garden with cover crops, pervious concrete, a septic system and phosphorus-free fertilizer.
7. **Rain Gardens:** Two gardens use water-loving plants to absorb and filter impurities from rain.
8. **Septic Systems:** Septic systems manage onsite sewage systems not connected to a city's sewage system.
9. **Raised Garden:** Enclosed framed beds of soil raised above the ground make tending the garden easier. Mature plants growing near each other help to suppress weeds and conserve moisture.
10. **Compost Bins:** Containers help turn food scraps and organic material into fertilizer for your garden.
11. **Woodlands:** Good timber management makes woodlands productive, provides wildlife habitat, and protects soil health and water quality.



12. **Lakes and Natural Wetlands:** Wetland plants filter impurities from water before it enters other water bodies.
13. **Two Stage Ditch:** This design includes a floodplain bench to reduce flooding and filter pollutants.
14. **Farmland:** This area shows how cover crops and other conservation practices help keep the soil healthy and the land productive.
15. **Indiana Soils:** Learn about the characteristics of our soils and how soil affects water quality.
16. **Water Well:** See the working parts of a well and a properly plugged well.
17. **Stream and Shoreline Protection:** Practices keep stream banks from eroding. Areas feature native plants, mulch, shrubs and a bench for wetland plants.
18. **Cover Crops:** These plants help protect soil from wind and water erosion. Deep roots allow water infiltration and nutrients into the soil.
19. **Water History Cabin:** Learn about the history of water uses and conservation here.
20. **Water Well Pump:** Enjoy a cup of cold water from our well.
21. **Pasture Management:** Well managed pastures improve animal health, increase profitability and enhance wildlife habitat while protecting water quality.
22. **Education Area:** Hands-on soil and water conservation activities for youth are featured here.



Walk the Path

that Water Walks at the
Pathway to Water Quality

A Soil and Water Conservation Exhibit

www.pathwaytowaterquality.org