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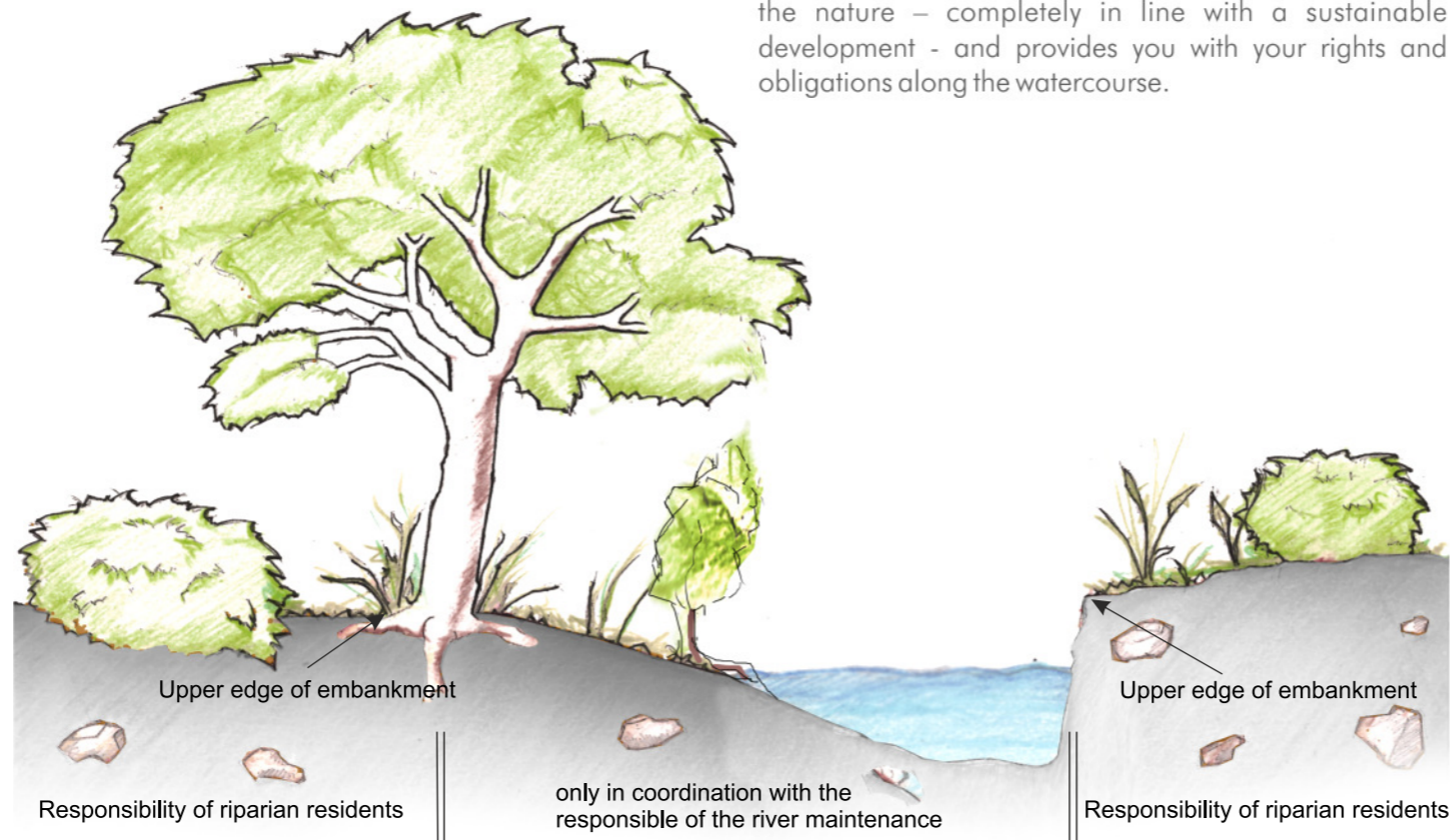


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Legislative Framework and ownership status

Either the state, the cities and the municipalities are the owners of the streams and rivers or the owners of the riparian properties. The municipalities, which are responsible for the river maintenance of small water bodies (category III), are obliged to ensure that no objects may hinder the harmless water runoff in urban areas. For selected larger water bodies (category II, listed in the annex of the State Water Acts) the district or the individual states are responsible for maintenance or they pay a share of the costs for maintenance. The responsible for maintenance therefore carries out - where necessary - the maintenance measures, like woody plant care in the urban areas. The riparian residents and owners must tolerate these measures.



Living waters for people and nature

Idyllic sound of splashing water, fish, birds and fresh green twigs of willows and alders – a near-natural stream offers relaxation and recreational opportunities. A person who has its property located close to a stream can count himself lucky: riparian residents have a peace of nature on the doorstep and therefore also the obligation to preserve these surroundings for their own and for the benefit of the community.

Streams and rivers are the life veins of our landscape and home for many fascinating and often endangered fauna and flora. Please help to conserve and to protect these jewels of nature for our descendants.

This leaflet shows what you can do for your stream and for the nature – completely in line with a sustainable development - and provides you with your rights and obligations along the watercourse.

Contact persons and further information

Further informations and contact persons you obtain for the most cases from the local water authority of your district or from your municipal district.

- Local water authority (i.d.R. Landkreise, kreisfreie Städte, im Saarland LUA)
- Authorization for water abstractions with pumps
 - the construction of building installations (e. g. cottages, stairs, jetties and similar matters) in and at the watercourse
 - Hydromorphological measures (bank protection)
 - Deposits at the watercourse

Further informations on the subject “running waters and their maintenance” are available in the Ministries for the Environment of the States Hesse (www.hmuklv.hessen.de), Rhineland-Palatinate (www.mueef.rlp.de) and Saarland (www.umwelt.saarland.de). Another contact point is the non-profit Society of Learning Promotion for Water Management and Landscape Development for employees (GFG) mbH (www.gfg-fortbildung.de), which takes care of the training und further education for local communities, districts and water managers, which are obliged to carry out river maintenance. Good focal points for questions are also stream sponsorships and voluntary nature conservation associations.

Gemeinnützige Fortbildungsgesellschaft für Wasserwirtschaft und Landschaftsentwicklung
der Deutschen Vereinigung für Wasserwirtschaft, Abwasser und Abfall e.V. (DWA)



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Tips and information for water residents



22 Jahre Gewässer-Nachbarschaften in Hessen, Rheinland Pfalz & Saarland

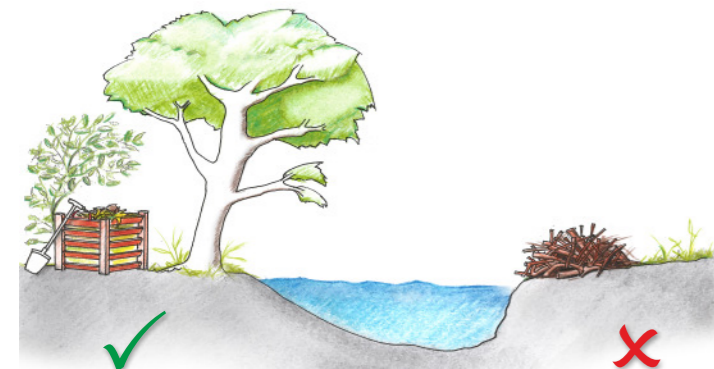
Gemeinnützige Fortbildungsgesellschaft für Wasserwirtschaft und Landschaftsentwicklung
der Deutschen Vereinigung für Wasserwirtschaft, Abwasser und Abfall e.V. (DWA)



What can the riparian residents do for their stream?

COMPOST/ WOOD STORAGE

Compost heaps, wood storages and straw bales do not belong on the riparian zone. The water cannot flow off, the stream inundates at those places and leads to floods. Damages occur by flooding. Furthermore, from deposits (e.g. grass cuttings) leachate may come out leading to enhanced inputs of nutrients in the stream (growth of algae).



✓ Sufficient distance from the stream, at least 5 - 10 meters

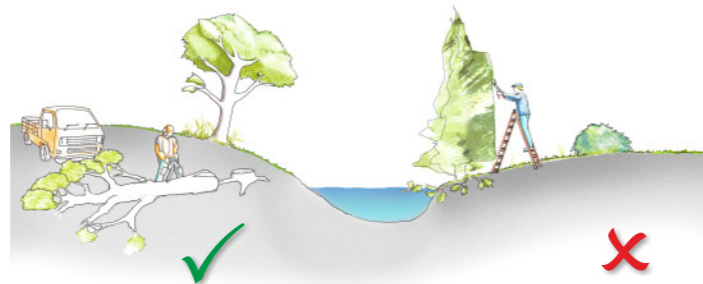
✗ No deposits at the stream bank and at the embankments

WOOD MAINTENANCE

Wood maintenance must be performed correctly (no trims, smooth and diagonal cuts, age-appropriate wooded groves and much more) up to the upper edges of the embankments and the legally established riparian strips. This must be done so far it is necessary for a proper flood discharge and in agreement with the responsible of the river maintenance.

✓ Professional woody plant care from October to February

✗ No woody plant care from March to September (breeding period for birds and amphibians)



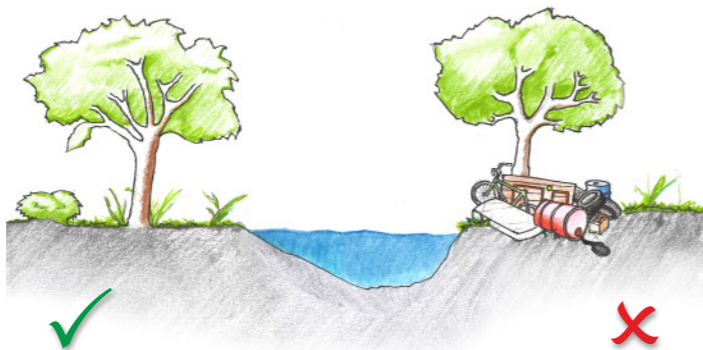
WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste does not belong to the water areas, but must be disposed at the places intended for it (e.g. recycling depots and green waste delivery points).

✓ Intermediate and transient storage of waste only at an adequate distance from the stream (danger of flooding and emission of pollutants).

✓ Green waste should be disposed onto a compost heap compost (grass clippings) or into green waste delivery points (wood clippings).

✗ No disposal of rubble, wood, green waste, waste-water, domestic waste and other wastes (e.g. hazardous waste, tyres, paint and pesticide residues in and at the water).



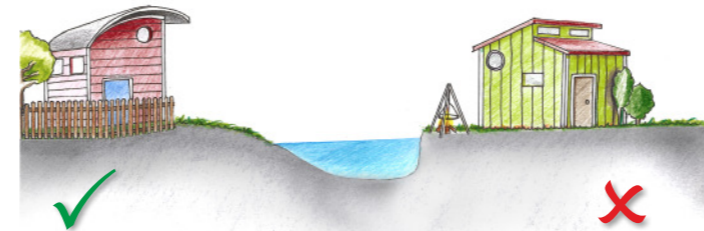
BUILDING INSTALLATIONS

Building installations are for example cottages, fences, jetties and bridges. They should not inhibit the access to the waters for enabling the responsible of the river maintenance to operate freely (e.g. for the woody plant care). Furthermore, building installations restrict the natural development of the streams (self-dynamic) and can act as barriers during flooding.

✓ Building installations like cottages have to maintain in town a buffer distance from the stream of 5 meters and at least 10 meters out-of-town.

✓ For larger streams in Rhineland-Palatinate (water bodies categories I and II) the buffer distance is 40 meters.

✗ No construction works without water-legal permission.



WATER ABSTRACTION

Streams are often used for watering the own property.

✓ The abstraction of water only by scooping from the surface (e.g. watering can, bucket)

✓ The use of rainwater for garden irrigation.

✗ No abstraction of water by pumps without permission (Exception: Hesse)

✗ No damming up of waterways (impedes the active and passive migration of fish and invertebrates).

✗ No construction of stairs to the waters (are only permitted in exceptional cases).

✗ In periods of low water, the abstraction of water can be limited or prohibited.



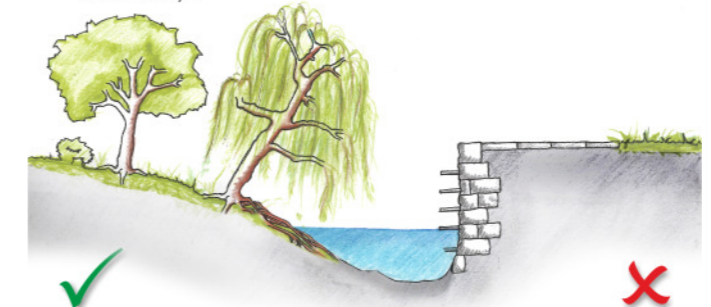
EMBANKMENT DESIGN

A near-nature stream bank serves to protect nature and your property.

✓ The roots of native plants protect stream banks

✗ No bank protection by walls, stairs or other materials like concrete slabs, building rubble, boards or similar objects.

✗ No bank protection or only in exceptional cases and with the permission from the competent water authority.



PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS AND FERTILIZER

The incorrect use of plant protection agents may lead to injuries to health and to environmental damages.

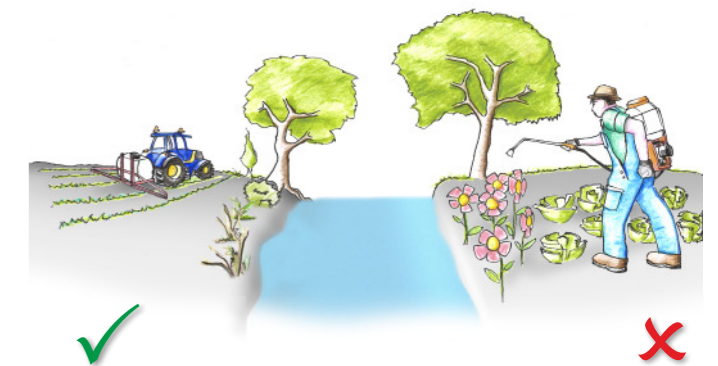
✓ Only use products, which are authorised for the home and garden area.

✓ Usage instructions should be read carefully. It is essential to follow the application notes (like mixing ratio, a safety distance to the stream, application area).

✓ The disposal of product residuals (remaining quantities and container) takes place at waste points (do not pour it down a drain).

✗ No application of plant protection agents and fertilisers in and at the water, keep a distance from the stream of at least 5–10 meters.

✗ No preventive application of plant protection agents (e.g. herbicides) on paved surfaces and on non-vegetated areas.



PENALTY

A breach on one of these listed regulations or the omission of necessary permissions lead to significant fines.