



G A R D E N C I T Y

What are Easements?

I have an Easement shown on my Property survey. What does this mean for me?

An easement is a portion of land that has been set-aside for a specific purpose. Easements give the City of Garden City or Utility Companies the right to construct and maintain facilities within the designated areas.

Is it still my property?

Yes, the easement is still your property. However, it does have restrictions and responsibilities for you as an owner or resident.

What can I do with this land?

Your options in an easement depend on what type of easement you have. Keep in mind that what you place in an easement has the potential of being removed or damaged if maintenance is required on the utility's facilities. All easements have to be maintained in accordance with City Code.

Utility Easements

A Utility easement may contain ANY type of utility: sanitary sewer, water, storm sewer, telephone, electric, gas, cable, etc. The Utility may be underground or overhead.

Do's in Utility Easements

You can use a utility easement for almost anything that you use your yard for. You can plant gardens and bushes, landscape and construct fences. However, anything that is in the easement when a Utility has to perform maintenance on their facilities may have to be removed.

Don'ts in Utility Easements

Don't place anything in the easement that will make it hard for a Utility company to maintain or replace their system. Anything permanent needs to stay out of easements. This includes retaining walls, fences, sheds or any type of building. Trees are also hard for a contractor to work around and the roots can damage the utility that lies beneath.

Drainage Easements

A drainage easement has its own set of restrictions. Unlike a utility easement, improper care of a drainage easement can cause damage to properties. A drainage easement may have a storm water line buried beneath it or it may be the intended pathway for surface water to flow. Some drainage easements have streams running through them all the time and some only have water after a rain. Some drainage easements are also intended to detain water after a rain to avoid flooding of other areas.

Do's in Drainage Easements

Maintain it as much as you possibly can. If it is intended to carry surface drainage, it may be soggy after rainfall events. If you do yard work near the easement that disturbs the soil, use a silt fence or other measures to control sediment and keep it out of the downstream areas. Fences are strongly discouraged in drainage easements and in some cases they are prohibited because they can block the natural flow of surface water. Please watch for and remove saplings that have been unintentionally planted by nature, or build-ups of debris or trash. These can also cause obstructions that can change or block the natural flow of surface water which can result flooding.

Don'ts in Drainage Easements

1. **Don't:** Fill, obstruct, block, alter or leave debris or trash in the drainage easement.
2. **Don't:** Construct or place improvements such as pools, sheds or other structures in the easement. Even temporary obstacles that cannot be easily moved such as swing sets may impede the flow of surface water within the easement.
3. **Don't:** Modify the existing topography or ground surface of the easement.
4. **Don't:** Impair the use or restrict the flow of storm water runoff within the easement.
5. **Don't:** Dispose of limbs, brush, grass clippings, leaves, or other such materials within the easement. If the easement is intended to carry a significant amount of water, debris can clog pipes and inlets further downstream and possibly cause flooding.

Questions?

If you have any drainage or easement related questions, please contact City Hall at 912-966-7777 and we will connect you with the best person to answer your question.