



STORMWATER

frequently

asked

QUESTIONS

1. There are no storm sewers on or near my property. Why should I pay a Stormwater Assessment Fee?

Even if your property has never flooded and there are no nearby storm sewers, the stormwater that flows off your property must be managed by the Borough so it does not contribute to pollution and flooding downstream. This also applies to cases in which the majority of stormwater is managed onsite. Property owners should contribute to services provided by the Borough that are beyond their property lines such as permit compliance, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) maintenance, and stormwater improvements throughout the Borough. Stormwater management is a community-wide service, and the stormwater management program costs need to be distributed to all property owners.

2. Why not include the stormwater management program costs in our property taxes?

The Borough is required to reduce the volume and improve the quality of stormwater that flows into local streams, the Susquehanna River, and eventually to the Chesapeake Bay. It will be difficult and expensive for the Borough to accomplish this objective. The disadvantage of a tax-based system is that residences would be hit unfairly with a larger share of the costs of the budget. A fee-based program also allows the Borough flexibility in incentivizing improvements on properties.

3. There is no separate fee/dedicated fund for police, parks, roads, etc. Why do we need it for stormwater?

Those services (police, parks, roads) are general services that the Borough provides. Stormwater is evolving to be a true utility, just like sewer, water and electricity, because of the regulatory requirements and the amount of infrastructure (pipes, channels, catch basins, etc.) that the Borough needs to operate and maintain. These utilities have separate fees because they need to link the fee to the services provided.

4. Isn't this fee really just another tax?

Some properties are exempt from taxes, but all developed properties contribute stormwater runoff and should pay the Stormwater Assessment Fee. Furthermore, the revenue can only be used for stormwater management and cannot be redirected for other uses.

5. My neighborhood has a stormwater retention pond and Homeowners' Association (HOA) fees to maintain it. Other residential neighborhoods do not have retention ponds. Can you provide a credit to my HOA to reduce fees?

Neighborhoods with existing stormwater retention or detention ponds still contribute runoff and pollution to the Borough's overall stormwater/drainage system. Stormwater management is a community wide service and the program costs need to be distributed to all Borough residents. Moreover, all residents of the Borough benefit from our stormwater/drainage infrastructure, public streets, and public streams and lakes. Credit policies for existing and future



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stormwater best management practices, including retention basins, have been reviewed by the Borough and may be implemented in the future.

6. Why will the Borough be charging me for rain?

Residents and businesses are not being charged for rain. The Stormwater Assessment will fund a stormwater management program to help reduce the pollution associated with stormwater runoff from reaching our local waterways, maintain the current stormwater drainage system, and address localized flooding concerns.

7. How do I affect stormwater runoff?

If you have a roof, driveway, parking lot or other impervious surface on your property you impact the amount and quality of stormwater that runs off the property. Also, household tasks such as car washing and use of fertilizer can impact stormwater quality. Because everyone contributes in some way to the stormwater system, everyone should play a role in supporting its maintenance and upkeep.

8. Hasn't the Borough always had a stormwater system? Nothing has changed on my property. Why will I be charged now when I haven't been in the past?

Yes, the Borough has had a stormwater system for a long time. However, new and forthcoming federal and state regulations require a comprehensive stormwater management program. The Stormwater Assessment enables the Borough to meet its responsibilities to manage the stormwater system more closely, implement required water quality projects, identify and eliminate illegal discharges, provide public education, and other regulatory requirements. It will also allow for increased inspection and maintenance of aging infrastructure and the ability to rehabilitate/replace infrastructure that's reached the end of its useful life.

9. Will I be charged even if it doesn't rain for a long time?

Yes, pollutants build up on all impervious surfaces even when it hasn't rained. In any storm, the initial runoff, or first flush, is the most contaminated. In addition to costs incurred to reduce pollution, maintenance of stormwater facilities is required whether it rains or not.

10. Does everyone in the Borough pay the Stormwater Assessment Fee, even non-profits?

Yes, everyone who owns developed property in the Borough will pay the Stormwater Assessment – homeowners, business owners, schools, churches. Tax-exempt properties are required to pay for other utility charges including electric, water and sewer, and the Stormwater Assessment is no different. Runoff from impervious surfaces from all properties makes its way into the stormwater collection system and receiving streams which need to be managed and maintained by the Borough.

11. What is an Equivalent Tenth of an Acre Unit (ETU)?

An equivalent tenth of an acre unit (ETU) is the total deeded parcel acreage, divided by 0.1, to determine the equivalent tenth of an acre unit for each parcel.



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12. How did you come up with the cost of the stormwater assessment?

A list of known problems, scheduled improvements, and projected projects to comply with regulatory requirements was used as a basis for preparation of a forecast of stormwater program expenses. A five-year budget projection, including administrative and operation & maintenance costs, was also developed to establish funding needs. These overall stormwater system costs were distributed over the number of ETUs to come up with an equitable and fair assessment.

13. How will residential properties be billed?

All single-family residential properties will be billed monthly based upon the following scale:

| Single-Family Residential Equivalent Tenth of an Acre Unit | Adjusted Equivalent Tenth of an Acre Unit | Monthly Bill |
|--|---|--------------|
| 1 | 1 | \$7.70 |
| 2 to < 5 | 2 | \$15.40 |
| 5 to < 10 | 3 | \$23.10 |
| 10 to < 15 | 4 | \$30.80 |
| 15 to < 20 | 5 | \$38.50 |
| 20 or more | 6 | \$46.20 |

14. How will non-single-family residential properties be billed?

Each non-single-family residential property will be billed a monthly fee based upon the total ETU. There is no maximum fee for non-residential properties.

15. Where does the money collected from the stormwater assessment go?

All money generated by stormwater assessment charges will be tracked through the Stormwater Fund which is separate from the Borough’s General Fund. Funds will be used solely for the implementation of the stormwater program. The fee will fund many initiatives required by the stormwater program, including:

- Infrastructure construction, maintenance and repair
- Stormwater quality improvement projects
- Flood mitigation projects
- Permit compliance
- Public education and outreach
- Illicit discharge detection and elimination

16. Will property taxes go down as a result of the stormwater assessment?

No changes are anticipated as a result of the Stormwater Assessment. Revenue from the Stormwater Assessment will be used only for stormwater management within the Borough.



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17. How is an unoccupied property treated?

Vacant residential structures and empty commercial/industrial buildings are charged because they continue to generate runoff similar to that generated by occupied property.

18. How are undeveloped properties treated?

Undeveloped property is defined as real property that has not been altered by improvements such as buildings, parking lots, structures, or the addition of any other impervious areas. Undeveloped properties will not be charged a fee.

19. What happens when a residential property becomes vacant and other utility services are cut off?

The stormwater assessment applies whether the property is occupied or not.

20. Will credits be offered?

The Borough has evaluated a credits and appeals policy for single-family residential and non-single-family residential properties, but at this time no credits will be offered. The Borough has decided its resources are best used to get the Stormwater Management Program functioning before adding in a credit policy. The Borough intends to establish the policy within the framework to allow for implementation of credits in the future.