PADUCAH STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE FEE

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

May 21, 2019

Q1. What is stormwater and why is it a problem?

A1. Stormwater is water from rain and snowmelt that runs off streets, parking lots and other surfaces. Rooftops and paved areas not only prevent the water from being absorbed into the ground naturally but cause it to run off at a much faster rate. During large rain events, the runoff can exceed the capacity of the City's storm sewers resulting in flooding. Additionally, stormwater runoff contains pollutants that if unmanaged can affect the water quality of our streams and lakes.

Q2. What is the purpose of the stormwater infrastructure fee?

A2. The stormwater infrastructure fee will provide needed revenue to maintain and improve Paducah's existing stormwater infrastructure such as storm sewers, catch basins, and the floodwall and flood pump stations. Additionally, the stormwater infrastructure fee will be used to fund the development and implementation of the City's Stormwater Quality Management Plan (SWQMP) that is required by the Federal Clean Water Act and the Kentucky Division of Water's Stormwater permit issued to the City.

Q3. What are the stormwater infrastructure fees based on?

A3. The stormwater infrastructure fee is based on impervious area. A study of properties in Paducah indicated that a typical residential property in the City includes approximately 3,500 square feet of impervious surfaces. Impervious surfaces include areas such as rooftops, sidewalks, and driveways within the parcel limits.This "typical" residential impervious area value (3,500 square feet) is referred to as an Equivalent Residential Unit or ERU.

Q4. Where does the money go that is collected from the stormwater infrastructure fee?

A4. Some of the important uses of this stormwater infrastructure fee include:

1) Capital improvement projects to reduce the extent and frequency of flooding.
2) Maintenance and repair of the City's storm sewer system.
3) Maintenance and repair of the flood wall system.
4) Development of stormwater design standards and regulations.
5) Kentucky Division of Water permit compliance.

Q5. Who has to pay the stormwater infrastructure fee?

A5. Every developed property within the City has to pay the stormwater infrastructure fee.

Q6. How much is the charge for the stormwater infrastructure fee?

A6. The proposed stormwater infrastructure fee is $6.13 per ERU per month. All residential properties will pay $6.13 per month based on 1 ERU. Properties classified as "non-residential" such as commercial and industrial properties will pay a stormwater infrastructure fee based on the number of ERU's of measured impervious surface on their particular property. For example, a non-residential property with 35,700 square feet of impervious surface will receive a bill for 10.2 ERU's as shown below:

$$\frac{\textit{(35,700 Square Feet of Impervious Surface)}}{\textit{(3,500 Square Feet Per 1 ERU)}} = \textit{10.2 ERUs for the Non-Residential Parcel}$$

10.2 ERUs × $6.13 Per ERU = $62.53 Per Month for the Non-Residential Parcel

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FAQs Cont'd

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Q7. What is a stormwater credit policy?

A7. A stormwater credit policy will allow non-residential customers to implement additional stormwater quantity and quality controls on their property beyond what is required by the City's current regulations and receive a reduction in their monthly stormwater infrastructure fee for these efforts. The City is currently working through the development of a stormwater credit policy.

Q8. Why is the City charging me for rain water?

A8. You are not being charged for rain. The stormwater infrastructure fee is needed to fund programs to mitigate flooding, reduce the pollution of stormwater, and to provide revenue to maintain and improve the existing stormwater infrastructure in Paducah.

Q9. Hasn't the City always had storm drains? Nothing has changed at my home/business. Why am I being charged now when I wasn't just a few years ago?

A9. Yes, the City has had storm drains and a flood protection system for a long time. However, this infrastructure is very old and in need of repair and upgrades. The City needs to build new larger infrastructure to help mitigate flooding within the City. Finally, the federal regulations that require a comprehensive stormwater quality management program are relatively new. These regulations have only been in effect for cities with a population of 10,000 or more people since 2002. The stormwater infrastructure fee will enable the City to meet its responsibilities to manage the storm drain system, improve water quality, seek out and eliminate illicit discharges into the storm system, educate citizens, and enforce pollution prevention measures and techniques.

Q10. Am I still charged even if it doesn't rain for a long time?

A10. Yes. As mentioned above, the stormwater infrastructure fee will be used to improve the existing infrastructure and build new systems to better manage runoff when it does rain.

Q11. How was the rate for the residential stormwater infrastructure fee developed?

A11. In conjunction with an extensive flood mitigation study, the City convened numerous stakeholder advisory committees comprised of residents and local businesses. These groups provided feedback on proposed funding scenarios which ultimately led to a recommendation of $6.13 per ERU per month for a residential property.

Q12. I only have a driveway and no other stormwater leaves my property. Why am I being charged the stormwater infrastructure fee?

A12. Everyone benefits from the City's proposed Stormwater Management Program, whether or not each of us has a storm sewer connected directly to our property. The runoff generated from stormwater is contributing to problems throughout the City. The approach being taken with this program recognizes that everyone contributes to the problem (runoff and pollution), and everyone will share in its benefits (i.e., improved water quality, reduced flooding, better access to roads, etc.).

Q13. How will I be billed for the stormwater infrastructure fee?

A13. The stormwater infrastructure fee will be added to the monthly water bill as a separate line item.