

City Stormwater Infrastructure Maintenance FAQs

Q: What is stormwater?

A: Stormwater is a term for what becomes of rain after it falls onto our rooftops, driveways, sidewalks and other impervious surfaces that prevent it from naturally soaking into the ground. Stormwater runoff is a significant public concern because, if it is not properly controlled, it can cause serious damage to our properties and our environment. Therefore, local governments maintain systems of ditches, pipes, tunnels, culverts and basins to enable stormwater to reach our creeks and streams without damaging homes, businesses, and other infrastructure.

Q: What is a stormwater utility fee?

A: It is a yearly fee that goes toward the cost of maintaining and upgrading the City's stormwater drainage infrastructure and operating a comprehensive Stormwater Management Program that fully complies with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mandates.

Q: Why is the City charging a stormwater utility fee?

A: The EPA issued new stormwater permits that require communities to address water pollution caused by stormwater runoff. In addition to meeting the City's current stormwater needs, the new Stormwater Utility Fund will provide the City with necessary resources to fully address unfunded federal and state regulatory requirements. Previously, the City dealt with stormwater management on a reactive, as-needed basis. The age, size and condition of the City's stormwater infrastructure demands a consistent, proactive approach. To do that, the

City joined all other major cities and counties in South Carolina in adopting a stormwater utility fee.

Q: What will the stormwater fee pay for?

A: The stormwater utility fee will be used to pay for the following:

- Emergency repair of City-owned stormwater infrastructure
- Maintenance of City-owned stormwater management infrastructure
- Construction site inspection for erosion control
- Stormwater management master planning
- Stormwater system mapping
- Public education and outreach
- Drainage capital improvement plan
- Flood control improvements

Q: When was the stormwater utility fee adopted?

A: On May 10, 2010, after multiple public meetings on the subject, City Council approved a revision to the Stormwater Management Ordinance establishing a Stormwater Utility Fee.

Q: How much do residential customers pay?

A: Single family residential properties are assessed a fee according to their size. The annual charge on homes with a footprint of 1,640 sq.ft. or smaller is \$30. The yearly fee on homes with a larger footprint is \$42. That fee is included on the annual Spartanburg County Property Tax Notice for residential properties.

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Q: What do owners of non-residential properties pay?

A: Owners of all properties not containing a single-family residence will be charged an annual fee based on the amount of impervious area each property contains. Those properties are assessed a rate based on \$30 per 2,000 sq.ft of impervious area. The City will invoice non-residential property owners.

Q: What does impervious mean?

A: Impervious is a term used to describe a surface that does not absorb runoff. Examples of impervious surfaces include roofs of buildings, asphalt or concrete. Governments typically use the amount of impervious surface on each property as the basis for the fee calculations because it is the most accurate readily available indicator of the impact each property has on the stormwater system.

Q: How does the City know the amount of impervious surfaces on each parcel?

A: The City employed qualified engineering consultants to compute all impervious surfaces for each non-residential property located in the City limits. The firm utilized Geographical Information System (GIS) analysis of aerial photography, along with other public records, to identify and measure the amount of impervious area for each parcel.

Q: What do I do if I think there is an error in my bill?

A: A customer may provide additional information for their property, including a stamped survey or approved (stamped) site plan showing all impervious surfaces in

addition to property boundary. An appeal form can be obtained by [downloading the form from the city's website](#) or by calling (864) 596-2089. City staff will review the appeal (along with all supporting documentation) and respond to the appeal within thirty (30) days.

Q: How long does the appeal process take?

A: Appeals will be reviewed within thirty (30) days of the receipt on the appeal form along with all supporting documents. Customers will be notified by mail of the outcome of the appeal.

Q: What is the City doing to minimize the impact of stormwater?

A: The City of Spartanburg has a number of programs to specifically target the problems associated with stormwater:

- **Inspection and Prevention:** The City inspects and monitors construction sites to ensure proper controls are in place to minimize runoff.
- **Planning & Engineering:** The City reviews design and construction plans for the impact of stormwater.
- **Maintenance:** The City designs and maintains stormwater infrastructure.

For additional information about stormwater management, please contact City of Spartanburg Stormwater Manager Jay Squires at jsquires@cityofspartanburg or at (864) 596-2089. For billing questions, please call (864) 562-4511.