

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE **STORM WATER UTILITY FEE RATE ADJUSTMENT**

In December 2014, the Indianapolis City-County Council approved a proposal that may change your storm water utility fee. Effective July 1, 2015, all storm water fees will be calculated based on the City's measurement of the impervious surface area on the parcel. Residents will be able view their altered fee amount and the amount of impervious surface area using an online customer service database. Below are answers to common questions about the rate adjustment. For more information visit indy.gov/stormwater.

WHY WAS THERE A RECENT RATE ADJUSTMENT?

Under the old storm water rate adjustment, approved in 2005, commercial parcels were assessed \$2.25 per month per 2800 square feet of impervious surface area on the parcel, but residential parcels were charged at a flat rate of only \$2.25 per month. This rate was well below the amount required to meet the current storm water drainage and water quality needs in the community. With the 2015 rate adjustment, crucial flood prevention and drainage improvement can begin.

WHAT IS THE STORM WATER USER FEE FOR CITIES LIKE INDIANAPOLIS?

The City's study of storm water rates in similar and nearby cities shows that the fee amounts that will be paid by Indy residents with this new rate will still be lower than many nearby cities such as Fishers, Fort Wayne, Muncie and Columbus, Ohio.

HOW IS MY BILL CALCULATED?

Effective July 1, 2015, storm water fees will be based on the City's measurement of the impervious surface area on your parcel. The approved rate is \$1.10 per 1000 square feet of impervious surface area. This means that parcels with up to 1000 square feet of impervious surface area will pay \$1.10 per month, parcels with between 1001 and 2000 square feet of impervious surface area will pay \$2.20 per month, and so on.

Impervious surface area is any ground surface where rain and storm water cannot be easily absorbed into the earth, such as paved roads, driveways, patios, cement walkways and the area covered by houses and garages

WHAT DOES MY BILL PAY FOR?

A high priority list of \$81 million in projects to be completed through 2018 will:

- Alleviate neighborhood and street flooding
- Enhance water quality in our rivers and streams by improving neighborhood drainage
- Restore and upgrade impervious infrastructure, such as streets and sidewalks, that have been damaged by standing water.

CAN I GET A DISCOUNT ON MY BILL?

Yes, the **storm water credit program** has opportunities for residents who choose to participate in City-approved storm water management on their properties. The credit program encourages the use of sustainable practices such as using a rain barrel, planting a rain garden, and utilizing vegetated filter strips. If you don't have storm water management practices in your home, the Green Infrastructure Supplemental Document explains credit-eligible storm water management methods.

ARE CURRENT STORM WATER BILL CREDITS STILL IN EFFECT?

Yes. All current credits are in effect until they expire in Dec. 2016. All new bill credits will be effective Jan. 2016.

WILL THE RATE ADJUSTMENT CHANGE HOW PROPERTY OWNERS ARE BILLED?

No. The City will continue to include the storm water user fee charges on the property tax statement. Tax-exempt property owners will continue to receive a separate bill for their storm water utilities.

WHO PAYS STORM WATER USER FEES?

All properties in the City--including federal, state and local government properties, as well as tax-exempt properties--are subject to a storm water user fee, except for those in Speedway, Beech Grove and Cumberland. These areas have their own storm water programs.

HOW BIG IS THE STORM WATER SYSTEM?

The City estimates the value of the storm water system at approximately \$1.1 billion. The system includes 1,300 miles of storm sewer and ditches, 70,000 inlets and other structures, two high-hazard dams and 35 miles of flood protection levees.

WHERE CAN I SEE MY BILL AMOUNT ONLINE?

An **online customer service website** will allow residents to view their storm water fee and the amount of impervious surface area on their parcel.

WHERE CAN I GO IF I HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS?

With further questions, visit www.indy.gov/stormwater. The DPW Storm Water team is ready to answer all your questions about the storm water user fee adjustment.

Call **317-327-2015** or email **stormwater@indy.gov** with questions.

