

Stormwater Utility: Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Stormwater Utility?

A Stormwater Utility is a legal entity which provides maintenance, improvements, planning, regulation and administrative functions for the Town's stormwater collection system. A Stormwater Utility (like other Utilities) provides a method of generating revenues for these activities through user fees.

What is an ERU?

An "Equivalent Residential Unit", or ERU, is a measure of the average amount of impervious surface area for a single-family residential property located in Greentown and will be used to assess stormwater user fees. Much like a "kilowatt" serves as the basis for an electrical utility, the ERU is the base unit for a stormwater utility

What is an impervious surface?

Impervious surfaces are hardened surface areas which prevent or limit the natural entry of stormwater into the soil. Impervious surfaces include rooftops; streets; parking lots; sidewalks; driveways; patios; asphalt, concrete, gravel, and other paved areas.

What is stormwater runoff?

Since stormwater cannot be absorbed by impervious surfaces, the stormwater runs over the surface as stormwater runoff. Stormwater runoff must be managed through a stormwater collection system (pipes, culverts, ditches, swales, inlets, curb and gutter, and detention ponds) to prevent flooding and standing water.

How are user fees determined?

The Town completed a study that measured impervious surface areas and determined the ERU as a base billing unit. Non-residential properties (businesses, industries, churches, schools, medical facilities, etc.) are billed based on the amount of impervious area on their property. Residential properties are billed 1 ERU per month.

What are the effects of increased runoff?

With increased amounts of impervious surface, more runoff is produced and it travels at higher speeds. This runoff picks up and carries pollutants to the stormwater collection system and eventually to receiving waters (lakes, ponds, rivers and streams). Large volumes of quickly flowing runoff will also erode soil, damage plants, and cause waters to become clouded and murky with sediments.

Why do I have to pay a stormwater user fee?

The Town is responsible for providing stormwater management facilities and services, including installation and maintenance of storm sewers, inlets and ditches. Funding is not provided by the federal or state government for these services, so the Town must establish a funding source. The revenue generated from the stormwater user fees can be used throughout the Town to improve the Town in the following ways:

- Fund storm sewer maintenance and drainage improvement projects;
- Provide maintenance of the existing storm sewer collection system;
- Repair ditch banks to provide stabilization; and
- Cleaning of pipes and dredging of ditches.

Why do I have to pay when I do not have any drainage problems?

Everyone in the community benefits from the management of stormwater. If stormwater runs off your property, the Town must have a program and funding to manage the runoff. Stormwater management includes keeping streets from flooding, reviewing and approving drainage plans for new development to ensure that your property is protected from upstream runoff when development occurs and maintaining and expanding stormwater collection system infrastructure.

Are tax-exempt properties also exempt from the stormwater fee?

No, because the stormwater user fee is a utility fee and not a tax. The stormwater user fee is assessed based on impervious surface area which is directly related to the amount of stormwater runoff from the property.

I have additional questions. Where can I get more information?

If you would like additional information on the Stormwater Utility or have specific concerns about stormwater management issues, please contact the Utility office at 765-628-3263

Greentown Utilities
112 N. Meridian Street
Greentown, IN 46936
765-628-3265