

What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is the discharge of water due to runoff from precipitation. Stormwater runoff occurs when precipitation from rain or snow melt flows over impervious surfaces.

Impervious surfaces are areas that impede the infiltration of water into the soil.

Concrete, asphalt, rooftops and even severely compacted areas of soil are considered impervious. Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants. These substances are then carried into storm sewer systems or directly to a waterway. This discharge can destroy aquatic habitat, lessen aesthetic value, and threaten public health with contaminated food, drinking water supplies, and recreational waterways.



Mission Statement

The mission of the Stormwater Division is to protect public health, safety, and the environment through the effective management, operation and maintenance of the stormwater systems, to provide vector control services designed to educate the public and to detect, reduce or eliminate potential disease carrying vectors. Call the Stormwater Hotline to report any Illicit Discharge at 304-817-0011.

Commitment

Our purpose is to preserve and protect the local watersheds and streams from pollution and flooding through the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) that are defined in the City's Stormwater Management Plan. We must effectively and efficiently utilize all fees and educational materials in the management of the City's permitted stormwater runoff so the highest possible quality of water will be achieved.

Stormwater Design Manual

The [Stormwater Management Design Manual](#) is provided for guidance to property owners, developers, and consultants in the application and permitting process in obtaining a [Stormwater Permit](#), specifically for land disturbance projects within the City of Bluefield Watershed.



Frequently Asked Questions

What happens when it rains?



Rainwater runs across impervious surfaces (parking lots, roofs, streets, etc.) and collects in the City's storm sewers. Most of this water then travels directly into our streams and rivers. Occasionally, excess rainwater overwhelms the storm sewers, or these facilities fail to function as designed. The water then floods into our homes, businesses and streets. In some locations (depending on the age and design of the storm and sanitary sewers) rainwater may overflow out of the storm sewer system and into an adjacent sanitary sewer system. These excess flows are sometimes discharged directly into the watershed.



What are the benefits of stormwater management?

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By enacting stormwater management, we will comply with Federal and State requirements. This also means that we will improve the water quality in our urban watershed. Other benefits may include flood control, a significant reduction in pollution caused by surcharged sanitary sewers, improved watershed planning, public education and the improved maintenance, repair and expansion of our storm water collection system.

What is a storm water utility fee?

A storm water utility fee is the result of unfunded USEPA mandates on storm water discharge. This fee is used to finance annual compliance with the NPDES permitting standards. This fee is similar to a water or sewer fee. In essence, customers pay a fee to convey storm water from their properties.

Why do I have to pay a stormwater fee?

As a resident of the Bluefield Watershed, we all contribute to stormwater runoff during precipitation events. Since we all contribute, we all must pay a fair share to fund programs which allow for education, infrastructure maintenance, and pollutant removal from our local streams and creeks.

What is NPDES?

NPDES stands for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, which is the compliance system for the Clean Water Act. NPDES requires that all storm water discharges that enter waters of the United States must meet minimum federal water quality requirements.

How is the Stormwater Utility fee collected?

The stormwater fee is included as a separate item on the bill for city fees which also includes street fee, fire fee and garbage fee. It is due each month. For further information click [here](#).

Is the storm water utility fee considered a tax?

No, the storm water utility fee is not a tax. It is a fee generated to maintain the storm water utility system and fund the NPDES permit compliance. It is user based and dependent on the contribution to the storm sewer system.

Is this a City tax?

Absolutely not. This is a stormwater system user fee which can only be applied towards meeting WV Department of Environmental Protection (WV DEP) Stormwater Permit requirements.

What is the City of Bluefield doing about illegal dumping into the storm drains?

There is an ordinance in the process of being drawn up that addresses dumping and litter. Enforcement of this ordinance is part of the City of Bluefield's Phase II permit requirements. Code enforcement officers are authorized to cite any person or persons caught illegally dumping any material other than rainwater into a storm drain.

What is my stormwater fee based on?

All residential properties are charged a flat rate fee. Commercial property fees are based on the amount of impervious surface of the property.

Who is exempt from paying stormwater fees?

Nobody, everyone who owns property within the City's Watershed must pay for their share of the stormwater contribution.

What is a "Watershed"?

The area that contributes surface water runoff into a tributary system or water course.

How does street sweeping affect stormwater?

By keeping our streets clean, pollutants such as leaked oil, gravels, and trash do not have the chance of washing down our drains and polluting our local streams and creeks.

Where can I get a copy of the City's Stormwater Ordinance?

To receive a cope of the City's Stormwater Ordinance please click [here](#).

[View All FAQ's](#)

Supporting Documents

Stormwater Design Manual 24.67 MB

Stormwater Permit Application 552.63 KB

Stormwater Tap In Application 124.18 KB

Web Links

[Stormwater Ordinance](#)

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