



Stormwater Utility Frequently Asked Questions:

What is a Stormwater Utility?

A Stormwater Utility is a legal entity which provides maintenance, improvements, planning, regulation, permitting and administrative functions for the stormwater collection system. A Stormwater Utility, similar to other utilities, needs a method of generating revenues to perform necessary maintenance and improvements. Stormwater user fees are the standard method to collect this revenue.

What are stormwater user fees?

The Stormwater Utility will charge residential and non-residential customers stormwater user fees. These user fees will be included on your tax bill. The user fee will be determined based on the annual maintenance and master plan project costs needed to manage the stormwater needs for the Town. These fees are typically applied monthly.

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. In the Town of Pendleton, the average impervious surface area for a single-family residential property is 3,842 square feet.

What is an impervious surface?

Impervious surfaces are hard surfaces which prevent or limit the natural entry of stormwater into the soil. Impervious surfaces include all hard surfaces such as rooftops, driveways, parking lots, patios, and sidewalks (concrete, asphalt and compacted gravel surfaces are included). Impervious surfaces increase stormwater runoff and may contribute to stormwater pollution.

How are non-residential user fees determined?

The Town is studying fee options. Currently all commercial, tax exempt, and industrial properties are being measured for their impervious areas. The amount of impervious area will be divided by the average ERU (3,842) to get an ERU total for the property. The fee per ERU has not yet been established.

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

No, tax exempt properties will be responsible for paying the stormwater user fee because the stormwater user fee is a utility fee and not a tax.

What is stormwater runoff?

Stormwater runoff is rainfall in excess of what can percolate into the ground. On open land, runoff is typically less than on impervious surfaces. Stormwater runoff is managed by the stormwater collection network which includes; curb and gutter, pipes, culverts, ditches, swales, manholes, inlets, detention ponds, etc.

How is stormwater affected by 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 network. Large volumes of quickly flowing runoff will also erode soil, damage plants, and cause water to become clouded and murky with sediments.

How is stormwater affected by increased pollutants?

Within urbanized areas, impervious surfaces tend to collect a variety of pollutants. Increased amount of pollutants can harm fish and wildlife, plants, contaminate drinking water supplies, and make recreational areas unsafe.

Why do I have to pay a stormwater user fee?

The Town is responsible for maintaining stormwater management facilities. Historically, there has not been a dedicated fund to address the Town's stormwater management needs. Although the Town has done a good job providing stormwater services on a limited budget, the number of drainage projects has grown and maintenance activities have been cut back at times due to a lack of resources. In order to better serve the community a new revenue stream is needed.

Additionally, funding is not provided by the federal or state government for these services, yet federal mandates exist for their management. Once the Stormwater User fee is in place, the revenue generated will be used for improvements and annual expenses to manage stormwater in Pendleton.

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 Town at 765-778-7776. If you would like to submit a stormwater issue online, please use the QR code reader on your phone, or visit the Town website at www.town.pendleton.in.us page for a link.

QR Code:

