



Strict federal regulations requiring the Township to reduce polluted streams and an aging stormwater infrastructure system are creating enormous burdens on the Township. In order to address the requirements imposed on the Township, and to fund the continual maintenance and repair of the existing stormwater infrastructure, the Township is proposing to transfer the infrastructure to the Susquehanna Township Authority (STA) and to impose a Stormwater Program Fee.

The fee is an equitable, fair, and low-cost solution. Revenue raised through the fee would be dedicated to important infrastructure repairs and improvements to the watershed.



Clogged storm water outlets and broken pipes and structures create pollute the streams and reduce water quality.

Why is Susquehanna Township instituting a Stormwater Program Fee? The Township is faced with numerous challenges that are driving the implementation of a fee.

Challenge #1: Polluted streams - The Susquehanna River, Paxton Creek and other local waterways are considered impaired.

Challenge #2: Tightening regulations

- MS4 Permit requires implementation of a Pollutant Reduction Plan over next 5 years.
- 2018 MS4 Permit requires Township to have funding and staffing necessary to fully comply with increased regulations, including BMP installation.
- Growing number of communities fined for non-compliance.

Challenge #3: Aging infrastructure

- Roughly 530,000 linear feet of pipe & 5,300 inlets
- Significant portion of pipe and facilities anticipated to reach its useful life in next 10-20 years.

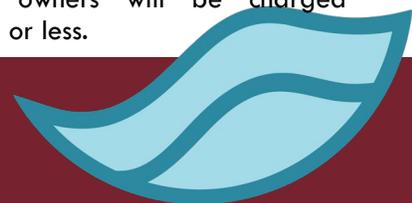
Challenge #4: Increased development - Large amounts of impervious area have resulted in more stormwater and flooding.

Challenge #5: Level funding - Historically, the Township has funded stormwater costs through tax revenues which have remained relatively stable despite growing costs.

Who is charged the Stormwater Program Fee? The fee will be billed to all owners of property within the municipal boundaries of Susquehanna Township based on the impervious area on a property. Impervious area is generally defined as surface that is covered or compacted to an extent as to impede the natural infiltration of water [rain] into the ground. Studies have shown that the amount of impervious area on a property is the most accurate, equitable, and scientific way to determine a property's stormwater impacts.

How did you come up with the cost of the Stormwater Program Fee? The fee is the result of discussions between Susquehanna Township, STA, its consulting engineers, and stakeholders. The importance of stormwater management to public health, safety, and welfare, desired level of service, mandated regulatory obligations, and existing and anticipated stormwater needs were comprehensively evaluated and considered. Overall stormwater costs were divided by the amount of impervious area to calculate a per 1,000 square feet of impervious area Stormwater Program Fee.

How did you determine what I owe? Your fee is based on the total amount of impervious area on your property. For a typical homeowner, that would include not just the house itself, but things like patios, walkways and driveways. While the total fee has not been established, approximately 80% of the township property owners will be charged approximately \$10 per month or less.



WHAT IS AN IMPERVIOUS SURFACE?

An impervious surface refers to any surface that water cannot soak into asphalt (streets), concrete (sidewalks), highly compacted crushed stone and gravel, and rooftops. When water cannot soak into the ground, it either sits in one place or moves along to a place where it can soak into the ground or be collected. As it moves along these hard surfaces it gathers pollutants like trash, oil, brake dust, fertilizer, salt and pet waste.

Approximately 25% of Susquehanna Township is covered by impervious

How was impervious area data for property's collected? A flight was commissioned by Susquehanna Township to take aerial photographs of the entire township. This data was then processed into impervious surface layers, and separated out by the type of surface (i.e. stone, concrete, asphalt, etc.) Finally, an analysis of the data was performed to calculate the impervious surface for each individual property.

When should I expect my first bill?

Implementation of billing is expected to occur in Spring 2020.

Where does the money collected from the Stormwater Program Fee go? All stormwater revenue will be placed into a dedicated fund used only for the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the stormwater management system. The funds will cover costs associated with the following:

- Operation and Maintenance of Stormwater Infrastructure – STA will responsible for the operation

and maintenance of roughly 530,000 linear feet of stormwater pipeline, 5,300 inlets, and related infrastructure.

Enhanced maintenance of these facilities is necessary to reduce flooding, improve public safety, and extend the useful life of the asset.

- Regulatory Compliance – We are required by state and federal regulations to reduce stormwater pollution and improve water quality for local streams.
- Capital Improvement Projects – Over \$13 million in stormwater improvement needs has been identified through planning efforts. We will complete capital improvement planning to ensure dollars are invested in cost effective solutions to protect citizens and the environment.

Doesn't the Township already have a stormwater system in place? Nothing has changed on my property, so why will I be charged now? The Township has had a stormwater system in place for many years. However, in recent years there has been an increased emphasis on stormwater management. New and revised state and federal regulations require a comprehensive stormwater quality and management program. Susquehanna Township and STA have been working together to address these new regulations. The stormwater program fee ensures that STA receives adequate financial support to meet its responsibilities to manage the stormwater system more closely, identify and eliminate illegal discharges, provide public education, and other regulatory requirements. The fee will also be used to cover the cost for increased inspection and maintenance of aging infrastructure, implementation of flood reduction projects, and the ability to rehabilitate/replace infrastructure that's reached the end of its useful life.

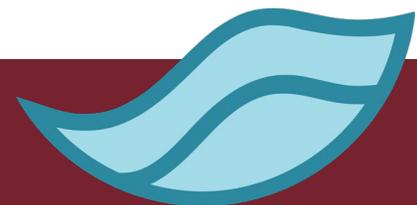
There are no storm sewers on or near my property. Why should I pay a fee?

All properties produce stormwater runoff that contribute to pollution and flooding downstream. Even if your property has never flooded and/or there are no nearby storm sewers, the stormwater that flows off your property must be managed. Stormwater management is a community-wide service that benefits the whole Township and the program costs need to be distributed to all users. All property owners benefit from the management of stormwater along public streets which they travel. The fee will also help cover other services provided by STA, such as MS4 system maintenance and permit compliance. Since there are additional services provided by STA, property owners who manage the majority of stormwater onsite will still pay a fee to help cover the additional services provided by STA beyond their property lines. STA will be developing a credit policy for onsite stormwater management activities, which are eligible for credits.

How is this different from a tax? All properties contribute stormwater runoff and should pay the stormwater fee; however, some properties are exempt from taxes. Unlike taxes, which are used for general services that the Township provides, the revenue from the stormwater fee can only be used for stormwater management and cannot be redirected for other uses.



Oil from cars washes into the storm drain from the road and pollutes the stream.



Why not just include the stormwater program costs in our property taxes?

The stormwater fee is based on the amount of impervious area rather than assessed value, so the cost is shifted to the properties that create more stormwater runoff. There is no correlation between assessed values and the amount of impervious surface on a given property. This makes it unfair to base the stormwater fee on the assessed value of the properties. The Township is located within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and is required to reduce the volume and improve quality of stormwater that flows into the streams and eventually to the Bay. It will be difficult and expensive for STA to accomplish this objective. An advantage of a fee-based system is that we can offer credits to property owners who reduce the quantity of stormwater or improve the quality of stormwater leaving their property. STA will be developing a credit policy to provide reductions to property owners who make improvements which assist STA in meeting the EPA/DEP requirements. We cannot give such a credit on a tax-based system.

Does everyone in the Township pay the fee, including non-profits? The fee will be paid by all property owners who own property in the Township. Non-profits will pay because it is a fee and not a property tax. Property taxes are based on the taxable assessed value of the property and the Stormwater Program Fee is based on how much a property contributes to stormwater runoff. Tax-exempt properties are required to pay for other utility charges including electric, water, and sanitary sewer; the stormwater system is a utility no different than other utilities.

Is there a way to reduce my fee? Yes. STA's Stormwater Program Fee will allow for credits. Credits are a monthly percent reduction in the Stormwater Program Fee for having and maintaining infrastructure which

BY THE NUMBERS

Susquehanna Township is responsible for maintaining the system that conveys stormwater to the streams, as well as the water quality and quantity entering the streams.



1,023 outfalls



5,300 inlets



200,500 linear feet of streams



508,000 linear feet of roads



530,300 linear feet of storm pipe

reduces the quantity of stormwater or improves the quality of stormwater leaving a property. The process for applying for credits will be defined as the program is rolled out, likely within 6 months of fee implementation.

How will properties be billed? For those properties with an existing sanitary sewer bill from STA, the Stormwater Program Fee will appear as a separate line item on your existing bill. For those without a current sewer bill from STA, a new monthly stormwater bill will be issued.

Why should I pay for rain falling on my property? Property owners are not being charged for rain falling on a property, but for the amount of runoff that is discharged into the township's stormwater system when it does rain. When rain falls on impervious area, it collects all sorts of pollutants, such as oil, grease, fertilizers and sediments. The amount of pollutants contained in stormwater can be correlated to the

amount of impervious area on a property. That stormwater - and all the pollutants it collects - eventually makes its way to the township's stormwater management system, which includes the Susquehanna River.

What is the big deal about stormwater runoff? How harmful can rain really be? It's not necessarily the rain itself that's harmful. It's the volume of runoff generated by development, and the waste and pollutants that the rain picks up after it hits the roofs, driveways, roads, parking lots, and other impervious area in developed communities.

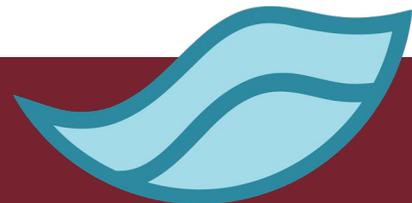
Even pervious areas like grass lawns or landscaped areas can contribute to the pollutants found in stormwater runoff. Here are some common pollutants found in or carried by stormwater runoff:

- Sediments (sand, silt, dirt)
- Vegetation (leaves, grass clippings)
- Litter
- Fertilizers
- Pesticides and herbicides
- Animal/pet waste
- Oil
- Fuel
- Phosphates (i.e., from soap used in car or pet washing)

We have found all sorts of things in our ditches and outfalls - basketballs, inflatable pools, 'For Sale' signs, tires, shopping carts...you name it! Vegetative debris like grass clippings and leaves can clog pipes and inlets.

It is AGAINST THE LAW to use storm drains or ditches for dumping! What goes into our storm drains and ditch eventually impacts our entire stormwater system and our environment. So remember, 'ONLY RAIN DOWN THE DRAIN.'

Why should I pay if there is no stormwater inlet/ ditch/curb in front of my property and/or I'm on a private road? Properties on private roads - whether they are dirt roads or behind gates - are still subject to the township's stormwater fee. According to





Streambank erosion causes sediment to enter the stream.

state statute, maintenance of private roads is the responsibility of the abutting property owners, and the township assumes that property owners are aware of this when they purchase a property on a private road. The township is, however, responsible for the pollutants in the runoff that comes from private roads.

My property retains water/doesn't discharge to the township's system.

Why should I pay? The stormwater fee is based on the impervious area on a property, because that impervious area is what generates the runoff that carries pollutants and that must be managed by the township's stormwater system. Rain and runoff may be absorbed by bare ground during light rain events, but generally, properties will discharge runoff from the property during heavier events.

Charging the fee according to impervious area ensures that everyone who is contributing to the stormwater system pays their fair share to support it. It is also important to keep in mind that the township is also responsible for the runoff from commonly used public areas, like streets and highways.

Will I get a discount or refund if it doesn't rain?

The stormwater fee isn't just about a singular rain event. Maintenance and improvements to the township's stormwater system happen all year-round, rain or shine. It is vitally important that we continually work to keep our system functioning so that when it does rain, our streets and homes don't flood. Protecting our environment is a year-round effort, too. Treating

stormwater runoff after a rain is just one component of a broader program to improve the health of our natural waterways.

Is there any way to get my stormwater fee discounted or reduced?

- There are a few ways to have your stormwater fee changed:
- Adjustments based on incorrect fee charges/calculations
 - Credits for providing facilities or services that support or enhance the township's stormwater system

Everyone in Susquehanna Township benefits from the township's stormwater system. Proper maintenance ensures the system keeps public roads and rights of way passable, and improvements to the system will help in the effort to improve the health of the Paxton Creek, Susquehanna River, and other natural waterways.

I pay my Homeowners Association (HOA) to maintain our stormwater system. Why do I have to pay the township for the same service?

The fee you pay to your Homeowners (or Business) Association is to maintain the facilities that are solely the HOA's responsibility by the approved plan. The township is responsible for ensuring that the runoff that comes from developments and off public roads and other properties is appropriately treated, controlled and transported in a safe, effective manner.

STA recognizes the benefits of privately maintained systems and has established a credit policy that allows property owners to seek discounts for structures (such as ponds), programs and/or services that help to improve the township's stormwater management system.

My neighborhood has a stormwater pond and HOA fees to maintain it. Can you provide a credit to my HOA to reduce our HOA fees?

STA is in the process of developing its credit policy. It is worthwhile to consider that neighborhoods with existing stormwater retention or detention ponds still

contribute runoff and pollution to the overall stormwater system which STA maintains. The program is a community wide service and all Township residents benefit from STA's stormwater/drainage infrastructure, public streets, and public streams so the cost needs to be distributed to all the users. If infrastructure installed and maintained by the HOA exceeds the requirements of the Township's Stormwater Management Ordinance, then it may be eligible for a credit, dependent upon the credit policy ultimately developed and implemented by STA.

Why am I getting charged for stormwater when I'm on septic?

The stormwater fee has nothing to do with potable (drinking) water or wastewater, or whether you're on sewer or have a septic tank. Stormwater is rain. The Stormwater Program Fee is being charged for the service the township provides in controlling, storing and/or treating the community's stormwater runoff, which is greater coming from developed properties.

Proper stormwater management is a vital infrastructure asset in order to protect the public health, properties, and downstream waterways from adverse effects that can result from stormwater runoff.

