



**1. When will a stormwater fee be implemented in the Township?**

A stormwater management fee will not be implemented unless and until it is approved by the Board of Commissioners. The earliest anticipated date for issuance of a stormwater fee (if approved) would be January 2022.

**2. The Sanitary Sewer System was sold to Aqua. Why does the Township require revenue for managing the stormwater pipes?**

Aqua purchased the wastewater system which uses separate pipes from the stormwater system. The Township remains responsible for stormwater conveyance, including all pipes, inlets and outfalls.



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

All properties produce stormwater runoff that must be managed by the Township. Even if your property has never flooded and there are no nearby storm sewers, the stormwater that flows off your property impacts roads, streams and other properties and must be managed by the Township. Stormwater management is a community-wide challenge and the stormwater services and program costs need to be distributed across the owners of all Township developed properties.

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

There is little correlation between assessed values and the amount of runoff from a given property. Therefore, a stormwater fee based on stormwater runoff is a more equitable way of raising the revenue required to properly manage our stormwater system. The stormwater fee also applies to tax-exempt properties which reduces the burden on taxpayers.

Another advantage of a fee-based system is that we can offer credits to the property owners to reduce the amount of stormwater that leaves their sites. Based on federal and state regulations, we can only offer credits if we use a fee-based, rather than a tax-based system.

**5. Does everyone in the township pay the fee, including non-profits?**

Yes, everyone who owns developed property in the township would pay the fee – homeowners, business owners, schools, churches. Tax-exempt properties are required to pay for other utility charges including electric, water and sewer and the stormwater fee would be no different. Runoff from all developed properties makes its way into the receiving streams which need to be managed and maintained by the Township. The only properties not being charged are undeveloped properties and public roads.



**6. What is impervious area?**

Impervious area is any surface which inhibits infiltration of rainfall into the soil. This includes pavement (asphalt, concrete, etc.), rooftops, patios, sidewalks, and compacted graveled surfaces such as parking areas and driveways.



**7. My neighborhood or condo community has a stormwater pond and homeowner association fees to maintain it. Other residential neighborhoods do not have ponds. Can you provide a credit to my homeowner association to reduce our homeowner association fees?**



The details of a credit program have not yet been developed. The extent to which existing ponds may be eligible for credits will be defined in a credit program to be prepared in the near future. Older ponds may not meet current design criteria for best management practices and therefore the available credits may be limited.

**8. How do I affect stormwater runoff?**

If your property has a roof, driveway, parking lot or other impervious surface, you impact the amount and quality of stormwater that runs off the property. Also, household tasks such as car washing and use of fertilizer can impact stormwater quality. Because all developed properties contribute in some way to the stormwater system, they should play a role in supporting its infrastructure and maintenance.



**9. Hasn't the Township always had a stormwater system? Nothing has changed on my property. Why will I be charged now when I haven't been in the past?**

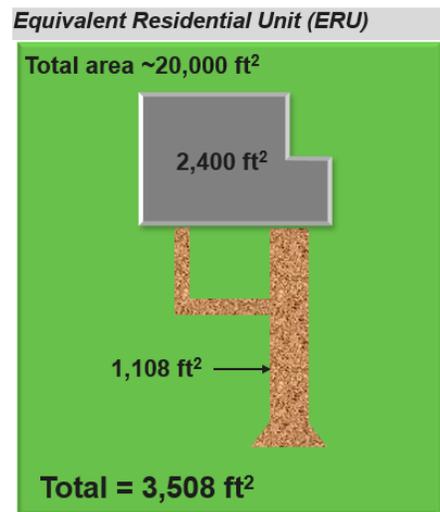
Yes, the Township has had a stormwater system for a long time. However, recent federal regulations now require a comprehensive stormwater quality and management program. A stormwater management fee would enable the Township to meet its increased responsibilities to manage the stormwater system more closely, comply with stricter pollutant criteria, identify and eliminate illegal discharges, provide public education, and other regulatory requirements. It would also allow for increased inspection and maintenance of aging infrastructure and the ability to rehabilitate/replace infrastructure that has reached the end of its useful life.

**10. How much will I be billed for the stormwater fee?**

The Township is still evaluating the rate structure and amount of the fee. This response will be updated when the information is available.

**11. What is an Equivalent Residential Unit?**

An equivalent residential unit is the amount of impervious surface (measured in square feet) on a typical, single-family residential property. That amount in Cheltenham Township is approximately 3,508 square feet. The equivalent residential unit was determined by



Single Family Residential (Base Unit)



performing detailed measurements of impervious surfaces on residential properties selected at representative locations across the Township. The resulting average amount of impervious surface value was set as the equivalent residential unit value.

**12. My residential property has less than 3,508 SF of impervious surface. Shouldn't I pay less?**

Very small properties (less than 0.1 acres) would pay only 50% of the Base Unit charge. Although there are variations in the amount of impervious surface between residential parcels and types of structures, the tiered flat rate per parcel has been selected for the following reasons:

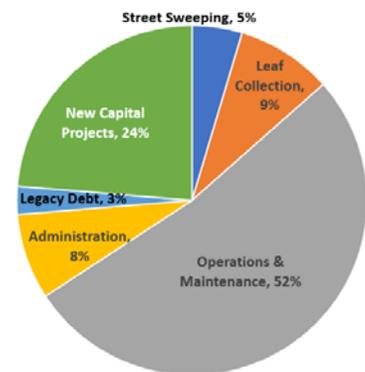
- The tiered rate structure is easy to explain and administer, requiring minimal cost and effort to implement and oversee compared to other billing options. The Township's time, effort, and revenues are best utilized in the operation and maintenance of the stormwater system, and keeping administrative efforts to a minimum is a great way to accomplish this.
- The Township would need to invest a significant amount of money and time to collect the additional impervious data from the geographical information system (GIS) in order to bill each residential customer for its exact amount of impervious surface. The resulting changes would likely be so small that at this time it is not recommended to individually calculate the rates for residential parcels.

**13. How are impervious surfaces determined?**

Impervious surfaces are measured from aerial photographs that have been processed to produce scaled images from which accurate measurements can be made. In certain cases, the Township may also utilize field measurements or data supplied on site plans to augment information available on aerial photography.

**14. How did you come up with the cost of the stormwater management fee?**

A list of known problems, scheduled improvements, and projected projects to comply with regulatory requirements was used as a basis for preparation of a forecast of stormwater program expenses. A 5-year budget projection, including administrative and operation & maintenance costs was also developed to establish funding needs. These overall stormwater system costs were divided by the number of equivalent residential units to come up with the stormwater management fee.



Stormwater Budget

**15. How will residential properties be billed?**

For those properties with an existing tax bill from the Township, it is anticipated that the stormwater fee will appear as a separate line item on the existing bill. For those without a current tax bill from the Township, a new stormwater bill would be issued.

**16. How will non-residential properties be billed?**

Each non-residential property has been measured to determine the amount of impervious area on the property. That impervious area will be converted to a quantity of equivalent residential units,



rounded to the nearest whole number. Each property would be billed the number of equivalent residential units times the Stormwater Management Fee rate (Fee = # ERUs x Rate per ERU). The fee will appear on a bill from the Township and no property will be billed for less than one equivalent residential unit. The fee may be billed quarterly or annually (TBD).

**17. How is unoccupied property treated?**

Vacant residential structures and empty commercial/industrial buildings are charged because they continue to generate runoff similar to that generated by occupied property.

**18. Will property taxes go down as a result of the Stormwater Management Fee?**

The Township Board of Commissioners is responsible for setting and adjusting property taxes. No changes are anticipated as a result of the stormwater management fee. Revenue from the stormwater management fee will be used only for stormwater management within the Township, which is seeing increasing costs in the future. Previous lack of sufficient revenues has postponed more aggressive investments in Township stormwater operations and maintenance.



**19. How is undeveloped property treated?**

Undeveloped property is defined as real property that has not been altered by improvements such as buildings, parking lots, structures, or the addition of any other impervious areas. Undeveloped property will not be charged a stormwater fee.

**20. Where does the money collected from the stormwater fee go?**

All stormwater fees and interest generated by stormwater charges will be accounted for separately from all other Township revenues and funds and will be used solely for the operation, maintenance, and management of the stormwater system. The fee will fund many initiatives required by the stormwater program, including:

- **Maintaining and Installing Stormwater Infrastructure** – Approximately 26 miles of piping and other system components make up the storm drainage system that protects the Township from flooding and makes the roads drivable during storms.
- **Education** – The best way to protect stormwater quality and stop pollution is to educate our citizens. We make changes in our behaviors when we learn about the negative consequences they create.
- **Protection of the Environment/Regulatory Compliance** – Development and other human interactions with the environment increase the amount of stormwater runoff which is contaminated and carries pollutants into our surface waters. The Township is required by state and federal regulations to address these issues, and





work to reduce stormwater pollution, stop illegal dumping, clean up our watershed and restore local streams.

- **Mapping the System** – In order to effectively maintain the storm drainage system, the Township will need to map all of the Township’s outfalls, drains, ditches, pipes and other system components while assessing the stability/safety of the existing infrastructure and monitoring for illicit discharges.

#### **21. How is billing for newly developed properties initiated?**

Properties undergoing initial development will not pay a stormwater fee until a certificate of occupancy is issued. If a certificate of occupancy is not issued within three years of the start of construction, the Township may initiate a stormwater management fee for the property. Properties undergoing redevelopment will continue to pay the stormwater fee that was assessed prior to initiating redevelopment activities. Upon completion of the redevelopment activities, the amount of the stormwater fee may be adjusted to reflect the final condition of the property.

#### **22. What happens when a residential property becomes vacant and other utility services are cut off?**

The stormwater fee applies whether the property is occupied or not.