

Facts About Your Annual Stormwater Utility Maintenance Fee



A Guide Explaining Stormwater Issues and Your Annual Fee

Stormwater management is a significant issue facing all municipalities due to the flooding, liability, and maintenance problems that can result from a major storm. In 1991, the City of Upper Arlington developed a comprehensive plan designed to resolve existing stormwater issues and to plan and implement cost-effective solutions as future needs arose. To fund this plan, the City initiated a stormwater management utility.

The Need for Stormwater Management

Changes in Our Environment

Intense residential and commercial growth has significantly reduced the amount of undeveloped or "rain-absorbing" land in the City. Homes and businesses have brought with them rooftops, driveways, parking lots and paved streets - hard surfaces that send rainwater rushing off into our natural and man-made drainage systems at a faster rate.

Physical State of Our Stormwater System

Upper Arlington's storm drainage system is aging. This, combined with increasing demands arising from the City's development over the years, have resulted in a deteriorating system that is not able to adequately handle run-off from a major storm.

Liability

As stormwater run-off has intensified over the years, it has become increasingly important that the City take precautionary steps to protect Upper Arlington citizens and surrounding communities from property damage and inconvenience when a major storm hits the area.



The Stormwater Management Plan Explained

The City's stormwater management plan provides:

- A city-wide drainage master plan that undertakes a systematic approach to planning facilities and programs for the control and disposal of stormwater.
- The continual regulation and enforcement of drainage requirements for new developments as well as existing developments.
- A capital improvement plan to construct new storm drainage facilities and replace old and deteriorating ones.
- A maintenance program for the periodic and planned repair and cleaning of the entire public storm drainage system.



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Finance Department

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The Stormwater Utility Service Charge Explained

- The stormwater utility service charge is based on the "fair share" principle. Since all developed properties generate excess stormwater runoff, the City assumes all residents benefit from stormwater management efforts, and should therefore share in its cost.
- One- and two-family residential properties are charged the same flat rate of \$2.75/month or \$33 per year.
- For commercial and other properties, the utility fee is based on total property area and land use.
- The stormwater utility fee is similar to a water or refuse bill and is not a tax or assessment.
- All proceeds are used to fund the City's stormwater management system.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

I don't see a drainage problem on my property, so why should I be charged?

The benefits are not site specific. Run-off from your property combines with that from other lots, accumulating to become part of the problem downstream. Benefits are gained throughout the City by minimizing the flooding of roads, intersections, and downstream properties.

Do I have to pay the entire utility fee if I plan to sell my property within the year?

The individual/party that owns the property in question when the utility bill is received is responsible for payment in full.

Is this fee tax deductible?

No, it is a utility fee just like your water or electric bills, and is therefore not tax deductible.

What is the line item on my bill that refers to neighborhood lights?

Some neighborhoods in the City petitioned to have neighborhood lights installed. These lights were installed at a one-time installation cost to each participating residence (paid through a property tax special assessment), and with an annual maintenance fee – the line item you see on your stormwater utility bill. Only those participating residences have a fee attached to this line item.

Does the stormwater utility fee pay for new development?

No, the developer is responsible for any new stormwater facility required as part of the project.

Is this a new layer of government?

No, the personnel that currently work on stormwater facilities will continue to do so. However, better maintenance practices have resulted in the need for additional staff.

If you have questions or concerns about your stormwater bill, please contact the Finance Department, at 583-5280.

If you have a stormwater issue at your home or in your neighborhood, please contact the Engineering Division, at 583-5360.



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