

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Management of stormwater runoff has become an increasingly important responsibility for combined with aging infrastructure, has resulted in local governments like Warner Robins developing and implementing more comprehensive stormwater management programs to address drainage system maintenance issues; high priority capital projects; development regulation and oversight; and to achieve compliance with new stormwater regulations.

In general, all developed properties in a community contribute stormwater runoff to the public drainage system, and in some cases to recurring drainage problems. Stormwater runoff is rainfall that drains off houses, rooftops, driveways, sidewalks, parking lots, roads and other features that prohibit infiltration of rainfall. This stormwater runoff then flows into the City drainage system, as well as our natural streams and channels, in greater volumes and at increased rates. In addition, the stormwater runoff washes pollutants and other environmental hazards into the drainage system and our local streams.

The Warner Robins Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) is responsible for the management and regulation of stormwater management and drainage issues within the City. The City has decided to set up a Stormwater Utility (SW Utility) to fund the future SWMP via a stormwater user fee charge as well as other secondary funding sources such as plan review fees. The following activities have been identified for implementation by the City SWMP and SW Utility:

Achieve Compliance with Applicable State and Federal Regulations

*National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Stormwater Permit
NPDES Wastewater Discharge Permit – Watershed Management Activities*

Implementation of Capital Drainage Improvement Projects

*Capital Drainage Project Construction
Drainage System Retrofitting
Drainage Basin Masterplanning & Floodplain Mapping Updates*

Drainage System Operations & Maintenance (O&M)

*Improve City Responsiveness / Capabilities
Compile a Detailed Inventory of the City Drainage System
Enhance System Inspections
Routine & Scheduled Drainage System Cleaning / Repair
Capital Replacement of Aging Drainage System Components*

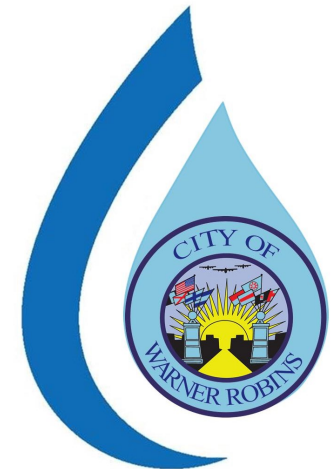
Expanded Development Regulation

*Ordinance Implementation & Enforcement
Development Plan Reviews & Enhanced Site Inspections*

The City SWMP must undertake various activities including the cleaning of pipes and other stormwater conveyance systems; replacement of aging culverts and drainage structures; and construction of new culvert systems to increase / improve conveyance capacity. In addition, the City will need to continue implementation of an ongoing regulatory compliance strategy to address new and expanding requirements. The City will also be implementing an O&M program that is focused on being more proactive through routine and scheduled drainage system maintenance. In order to successfully implement the City's future SWMP, a SW Utility and user fee charge has been identified as the primary funding source. The SW Utility and user fee charge encompass all residences, businesses, institutions and government facilities since all developed properties generate stormwater runoff. Please review the following FAQs for more information.

**“Only Rain in our
City’s Storm Drains”**

City of Warner Robins Stormwater Management Program



**STORMWATER
COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENT**

What is a stormwater user fee? A stormwater user fee is a fee collected from improved business and residential properties for the maintenance and repair of the City of Warner Robins stormwater infrastructure. These fees may not be used on any business or residential private property that the City has no rights to or ownership of. The revenue that is collected for the Stormwater Utility, known as a user fee, can only be utilized for provision of City of Warner Robins stormwater management services.

What is the stormwater user fee charge based on for a property? The stormwater user fee charge is based on the amount of impervious surface on a parcel. Impervious surfaces are typically manmade features on a property that cannot absorb rainfall including rooftops, driveways, sidewalks, parking lots, etc. The square footage of impervious surface on a property has a direct correlation to the stormwater runoff characteristics for the parcel including runoff volume, velocity, discharge rate and pollutant concentration. Increased runoff volume, velocity, discharge rate and pollutant concentration place a greater demand on the City drainage system to safely and efficiently convey runoff from that parcel. As such, one can deduce that larger parcels with greater amounts of impervious area will be charged a higher user fee based on the relative demand placed on the City's drainage system and the increased service level provided to that parcel.

Isn't this just another tax? *No, a stormwater user fee is not a tax.* Although the stormwater user fee charge is an additional fee to residents and businesses for stormwater services, it is not based on the assessed "value" of a property like a tax. Furthermore, all stormwater user fee revenues **must** be spent on City owned stormwater and drainage related issues whereas General Fund Tax Revenues are not subject to such restrictions.

What if I have a detention pond or some other stormwater control on my property to reduce the impact of stormwater runoff on the City's drainage system? Customers can apply for and secure credits against their stormwater user fee charge by following the procedures outlined in the SW Utility Credit Manual.

How did the City pay for the cost of stormwater management before Now? The City has traditionally paid for the costs of managing stormwater runoff by allocating a portion of property taxes to the SWMP.

Why not continue to fund the City SWMP with property taxes? The cost of managing stormwater runoff has significantly increased in the past few years due to additional EPD, permit requirements and issues outlined above. As a result, more resources are needed to continue to meet the required maintenance, inspection, new project needs and priorities of the City's SWMP. The SW Utility apportions the SWMP costs in an equitable manner to the parcels that place the greatest demand on the City drainage system and SWMP.

How will the stormwater user fee charge be calculated? The City has developed a detailed rate structure that apportions costs to properties in a fair and equitable method based on the relative demand (or amount of stormwater runoff contribution) that a parcel places on the City drainage system and SWMP. Customers' user fee bill will be calculated based on customer classes. There are two basic customer classes, residential and non-residential. Non-residential customers are referred to as non-single family residential (NSFR) customers. NSFR customers have a parcel-specific bill based on how much impervious surface is associated with the parcel. The customer will be billed \$2.75 for each 3,000 square foot increment of impervious surface (or portion thereof) per month. For example, if a customer has 63,000 square feet (sf) of impervious surface, the bill will be \$57.75 per month (63,000 sf / 3,000 sf x \$2.75 per month).

Residential customers are billed a flat rate based on the class of residential development that they reside in. Customers with traditional detached houses on individual lots are referred to as detached single family residential (DSFR) customers. Those customers that live in condominiums, town homes, duplexes, triplexes, etc. are referred to as attached residential (AR) customers. Finally, residents who live in manufactured homes are referred to as manufactured home (MH) customers.

DSFR customers will receive a flat rate monthly bill of \$2.75. AR customers will receive a monthly bill of \$1.98. Finally, MH customers will receive a bill of \$1.02 per month. The bills for AR and MH customers were developed based on the average impervious surface area of an AR or MH residence compared to the average impervious surface area of a DSFR residence. The lower fees reflect the smaller impervious area footprint of a typical AR or MH residence.

Is anyone exempt from the charges? Unlike property taxes, the only exemptions applied are to those properties that are Georgia DOT roadways, undeveloped properties (i.e. no impervious surfaces on the property) and those properties that do not ultimately discharge stormwater runoff to the City drainage system either directly or indirectly. All other property owners are required to pay their user fee charge.

What will be the frequency of billing and the billing mechanism? The stormwater user fee charge will be added to the existing monthly Public Utilities bill for residential property owners provided by the City to its customers for water, sewer, gas and sanitation services. Businesses will receive a monthly stormwater user fee utility bill, separate from their Public Utilities bill.

Who do I contact if I have additional questions?

Email Us at swcompliance@wrga.gov

SWMP

