



City of Lebanon Storm Water Management Fee Program

What is the storm water management fee?

A storm water management fee was established by the City of Lebanon to ensure City-owned storm water management facilities are well-maintained and to pay for the implementation of programs and facilities designed to reduce storm water pollution. Storm water pollution is a City-wide issue that must be properly managed to improve the quality of our local waterways. The operation and maintenance of a municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) is expensive, especially when federal and state regulatory requirements concerning water quality are considered.



Why is a storm water management fee necessary?

The City of Lebanon, like many local municipalities, must comply with state and federal MS4 mandates to reduce storm water pollution. Compliance with these unfunded mandates is expected to cost the City over \$3,400,000 over the next five years. Through the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) have imposed new regulations to require the clean-up of our impaired waterways, including the Quittapahilla Creek, Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay, so they are safe for their designated uses, such as public water supply and recreation. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulations require MS4 permittees, such as the City of Lebanon, to take specific actions to manage storm water pollution.

Prior to the 2018 MS4 permit renewal, the City of Lebanon was able to fund its storm water management program through normal tax collections. Under the new permit, the City is required to develop and implement a Pollutant Reduction Plan (PRP) designed to reduce pollutant loads carried by storm water runoff to the City's impaired waterways. Sediment discharges must be reduced by 10 percent over the next five years. Implementation of the PRP will dramatically increase the cost of the City's MS4 program and tax revenue is not sufficient to pay the expected costs.

Why are property owners paying a storm water fee instead of a tax?

A dedicated storm water management fee program links the revenue collected from the storm water management fee directly to the storm water services that the City provides. The fee is necessary for the City to fund its storm water management program since tax revenues are not enough to cover costs brought about by the new regulations.

Storm water management fees collected by the City must be spent specifically on storm water services and facilities. Revenue from tax collections, such as the property tax, are used to fund most of the City's general services, such as police and fire protection, road maintenance, code enforcement and administration. However, tax-exempt properties also generate storm water runoff and are subject to the fee. The revenue collected will enable the City to administer its storm water management program and build the capital improvements necessary to reduce storm water pollution.

Who will pay the storm water management Fee?

Storm water management fees are assessed on all properties in the City with at least 300 square feet of impervious cover. Impervious cover includes buildings, driveways, parking lots, sidewalks, patios, decks, tennis courts, etc. Stone surfaces are also considered impervious.

How is the storm water management fee calculated?

All properties in the City of Lebanon have been classified either as “Single-Family Residential” (SFR) or “Non-Single Family Residential” (non-SFR) based on the use of the property. The average amount of impervious area on a SFR property is called an Equivalent Residential Unit, or ERU. One ERU is 1,780 square feet in City of Lebanon. All SFR properties are charged for one (1) ERU. All non-SFR properties are charged multiple ERUs based on the total impervious area on the property. For example, a property with 1,780 square feet of impervious area would be charged for ten (10) ERUs. For each property, a fee of \$60.00 per ERU per year is charged for the first ERU and a fee of \$12.56 per ERU per year is charged for each additional ERU above one (1) ERU.

Why is impervious area being used to determine the fee?

Impervious areas consist of all “hard” surfaces such as rooftops, driveways, parking lots, sidewalks, concrete, stone, or gravel which prevent water from soaking into the ground. These surfaces increase both the rate and volume of storm water runoff reaching local streams. The excess runoff picks up pollutants such as trash, debris, sediment, oil, fertilizers, pesticides, and other chemicals along the way. Impervious areas are the focus of the storm water management fee because they are the primary source of pollution in developed watersheds, accounting for eight (8) times more pollutants than undeveloped areas.

How will the City of Lebanon spend the money generated?

The revenue generated by the storm water management fee will allow the City of Lebanon to meet federal and state storm water regulations, operate and maintain the MS4, and fund drainage improvement projects. The City is prohibited from spending the money for any purpose not related to the MS4 program.

I'd like to understand more. Where can I find additional information on the stormwater management fee?

The City of Lebanon is committed to being as transparent as possible and continues to work in the best interest of all City residents and property owners. The City is assisting property owners in understanding the storm water management fee by providing a Stormwater Management Fee FAQ document at www.lebanonpa.org

How can I reduce my bill?

The City is offering storm water management fee credits to property owners who install stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) or maintain existing BMPs. Eligible BMPs include, but are not limited to: detention and retention basins, infiltration trenches, riparian forest buffers, and vegetated swales. Single-family residences are eligible for up to a 100% BMP credit and non-single family residential property owners are eligible for up to a 50% BMP credit. Copies of the Credit Manual and Credit Application Form may be obtained from the City.



Riparian Buffer BMP at Northeast Park

How will the billing be handled for rental properties?

The bill will go to the property owner. It will be up to the property owner to decide how or if the tenants should share in the payment.

Can I appeal the storm water management fee?

A property owner who believes that the impervious area calculation and/or the classification of their property is incorrect may appeal the stormwater management fee, as can owners of two SFR properties that are adjacent, have only one house between the two properties, and have a total impervious area less than 2,670 square feet (1.5 ERUs). Additional information on appeals and the appeal form are available from the City.