

# CITY OF WEST LAFAYETTE

## STORMWATER PROGRAM

### Stormwater Capital Improvement Program and Service Charge

**Q: What is stormwater quality and why is it important to our community?**

A: When rain or snow falls in West Lafayette, the precipitation runs off impervious surfaces such as roofs, driveways, streets and parking lots into the stormwater drainage system. The stormwater, which may be polluted with chemicals, litter, and sediment, flows from the storm sewer directly into local streams and rivers. With little or no treatment, polluted stormwater creates unhealthy conditions for human and aquatic life.

**Q: What state and federal regulations promote clean water?**

A: Stormwater entering and exiting the city's storm sewers is regulated by the federal Clean Water Act and the Indiana's General Storm Water Permit Rule (Rule 13). In 1999 under Rule 13, West Lafayette was issued a joint National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The NPDES permit exists to establish a program for stormwater quality so that public health, existing water uses and aquatic life are protected. The city shares its permit with Dayton, Battle Ground, Ivy Tech College, Purdue University, Lafayette and Tippecanoe County.



### Stormwater Quality Impacts Humans and Aquatic Life



**Q: How are the NPDES requirements funded?**

A: Prior to the service charge being approved, the city operated a stormwater program, but a dedicated funding source was not in place. In the past, permit mandates as well as ongoing operational and maintenance activities of the storm sewer system were funded by the Wastewater Utility. Sanitary sewer users bared the burden for stormwater system improvements, which benefit all properties in the community, whether they were served by the storm sewer or not.

In 2014 and forward, stormwater sewer needs will be 100 percent funded by the Stormwater Fund.

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## Capital Program to Benefit Entire City

### **Q: What is the city's plan to fund the stormwater program?**

A: To meet NPDES Permit requirements, carry out operations activities and complete drainage improvements the City of West Lafayette established a dedicated stormwater revenue source, effective January 1, 2014. Stormwater runoff from properties—residential and non-residential—enters the city's storm sewers. The service change will allow the city to dedicate funding to drainage and stormwater quality improvements throughout the community.

### **Q: What stormwater needs will the proposed service charge address?**

A: In addition to funding NPDES permit requirements, the stormwater service charge will address necessary stormwater system improvements, expansion and drainage improvements. The service charge will fund the following high priority projects identified in the Stormwater Capital Program:

- Blackbird Pond Stormwater Improvements
- Celery Bog Nature Center Drainage Improvements
- Downtown/Waterfront Drainage Improvements
- Happy Hollow Park Erosion Control
- Plaza Parks/Cumberland Park Drainage Improvements
- "The Island" Green Infrastructure Improvements
- University Farms Drainage Improvements

## Proposed Service Charge to Fund Improvements

### **Q: Who will the proposed service charge affect? How much will it cost?**

A: Approved February 4, 2013, by the West Lafayette Common Council, developed residential and non-residential property owners are assessed a service charge.

- Residential Service Charge: Residential property are assessed assessed a flat \$8 monthly service charge based on the average impervious surface for the average residential parcel size, or an Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU). One ERU equals 3,200 square feet. The minimim bill will be one ERU or \$8.
- Proposed Non-Residential Service Charge: For non-residential property owners, the city calculates service charge based on actual measured impervious surface for a parcel. The minimim bill will be one ERU or \$8.

The stormwater program is a service that benefits all properties contributing stormwater to the sewer conveyance system, so all property owners, tax exempt or not, are assessed a fee. An appeals process exists for those questioning the city's service charge calculations.

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## Community Members Provided Input

### **Q: How will the proposed service charge be collected?**

A: The Stormwater Program functions as part of the Engineering Department. Statements and accounts are processed by the City Utility Billing Office. Property owners will receive their first stormwater service charge statements after January 2014. Customers that have water service will be billed monthly for the stormwater service charge on their existing wastewater utility statement. Those property owners without wastewater will be billed an individual monthly stormwater statement.

### **Q: What members of the public helped to develop the proposed service charge?**

A: Mayor John Dennis invited more than 30 residents to participate on the city's Stormwater Advisory Panel. Members represented West Lafayette neighborhoods, commercial business, property development, religious groups, Purdue University and local government. The committee discussed the city's progress and offered input on stormwater service charge development and the capital improvement program. Members, ultimately, assisted in formulating a service charge recommendation for consideration by the West Lafayette Common Council.

## How You Can Help

### **Q: How can a resident or business get more information about the proposed service charge?**

A: Information including the service charge calculations and capital project information is available at [www.westlafayette.in.gov](http://www.westlafayette.in.gov) in the Stormwater section of the Engineering page.

### **Q: How can a resident or business play a part in improving stormwater quality?**

A: Follow these simple tips to keep local waterways clean:

- Healthy lawns only need one inch of water per week. Water as needed during the cool times of the day, and prevent water from flowing into a storm drain.
- Use insecticides, herbicides and fertilizers appropriately. Review the instructions for proper use before applying these chemicals to your lawn or garden.
- Reduce impervious surfaces, or paved areas, on your property, and increase the amount of vegetated area in your yard.
- Clean up your pet's waste. It can end up in our waterways.
- Wash your car or truck at a car wash instead of cleaning it in your driveway.
- Consider innovative approaches to stormwater management, such as using rain barrels, planting rain gardens or installing green roofs.
- Clear trash and debris from storm drains and driveway pipes to prevent clogs, and dispose of the trash properly.
- Dispose of paint, motor oil and cleaning products properly. Contact the Tiptecanoe county Solid Waste District at 765-423-2858 or visit [www.tiptecanoe.waste.org](http://www.tiptecanoe.waste.org) for more information.
- Report drainage problems and illegal dumping to the City Engineering Department; call 765-775-5130.
- Learn more about stormwater programs and permitting by visiting the Indiana Department of Environmental Management Web site, [www.in.gov/idem](http://www.in.gov/idem).