

Special Assessments Guide

Stormwater Utility Fee

Homeownership costs beyond property taxes

The Surface Water & Sewer Division also manages the stormwater pipes and drains that carry rain and snowmelt to lakes, creeks, and the Mississippi River. Every property pays a stormwater utility fee based on how much hard surface (roof, driveway, sidewalk) that's draining water into the system. This fee is not a tax. It pays directly for:

- **Pipes and drains** – keeping over 600 miles of stormwater pipes and treatment systems working.
- **Flood mitigation** – building and fixing pipes, underground storage, tunnels, stormwater ponds, and drains to reduce flooding and build resilience to climate change.
- **Water quality protection** – funding treatment systems, street sweeping, and other practices that keep dirt, salt, and other pollutants out of local lakes, rivers, and creeks.
- **Regulatory requirements** – meeting state and federal clean water rules, monitoring and reducing stormwater pollution.
- **Green infrastructure** – supporting rain gardens to improve water quality, reduce urban heat island impacts, add habitat and build resilience to climate change.

Stormwater Utility Credit Program

Thanks to our Stormwater Utility Credit Program you can reduce this monthly fee if you install features, or “Best Management Practices” (also known as BMPs) that help support water quality.

Why this matters

- You can lower your monthly fee by adding features that soak up or clean rainwater.
- These projects help protect water quality.

Ways to save

- Build a raingarden, use pervious pavement, add a green roof, or install a stormwater reuse system (rain barrels are not eligible).
- Save up to 35% off your bill citywide, or up to 45% off if you live in a Green Zone.
- Apply between May 1 – October 1.