

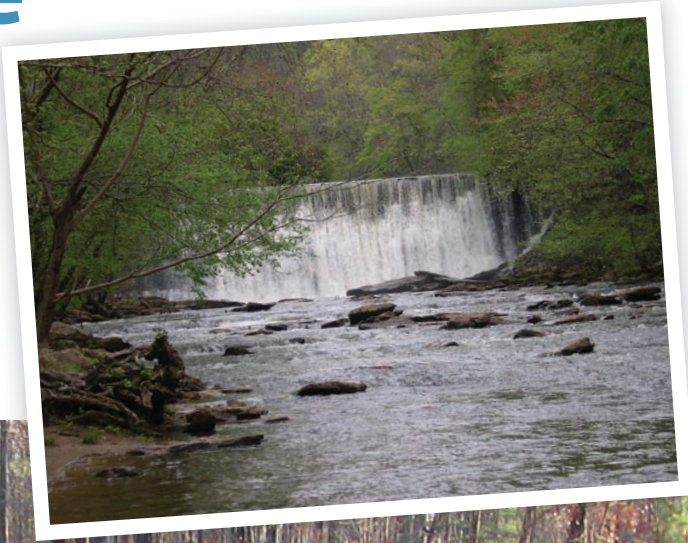
# Managing Stormwater



**R**OSWELL  
GEORGIA  
SINCE 1854

# Protecting Our Quality of Life

The City of Roswell is facing an increasing and complex set of challenges as our stormwater drainage and control system ages and the City continues to expand and prosper. Stormwater runoff and the effects it is having on our aging infrastructure are a growing concern for the City. Maintaining and improving this system is imperative if we are to prevent flooding, guard against property damage and protect the economic development and quality of life of our citizens.



## What Is Stormwater Runoff?

Stormwater runoff is the water that flows from rooftops, sidewalks, parking lots, streets, driveways, yards and other surfaces into our creeks and streams. Most people don't think about stormwater unless they are driving through flooded streets or experiencing flooding in their yards. Stormwater runoff also contributes to other problems that are less obvious than flooded streets. Stormwater becomes a problem when it runs off "impervious" or hardened surfaces and picks up pollutants such as fertilizers from yards, pet waste, oils, and pesticides and carries them to the nearest stream or lake, degrading the water quality.

The Clean Water Act of 1972 requires local governments to implement stormwater management programs in order to prevent harmful pollutants from degrading our waterways. These regulations, combined with State stormwater regulations, an aging infrastructure and the deferral of needed capital projects, has resulted in local governments like Roswell developing and implementing comprehensive stormwater management programs.



# Roswell's Stormwater Management Program

The City of Roswell is improving water quality, addressing water quantity and managing the drainage infrastructure through the Stormwater Management Program. Specific measures the City must manage and address include:

- Public education and involvement;
- Illicit discharge detection and elimination;
- Construction site runoff control and post-construction runoff control;
- Litter control,
- Floodplain management;
- Watershed planning;
- Water quality monitoring;
- Drainage systems operation and maintenance;
- Capital improvement program planning.

The goals of the City's Stormwater Management Program include:

- Complying with State and Federal regulations;
- Keeping major roadways passable in heavy storm events and avoiding flooding of homes and businesses;
- Keeping streams healthy for human consumption and wildlife;

- Replacing aging infrastructure, and
- Performing necessary routine maintenance of infrastructure.

Many of the City's stormwater pipes are 20 to 30 years old or older and near the end of their useful life. Replacing the older pipes proactively is important before they fail. Preventative maintenance of these pipes, like preventative maintenance on a car, is less expensive for the City in the long run. Replacing these older pipes now will also prevent the possible collapse of roads and sidewalks which are costly to repair and pose a threat to safety of drivers and pedestrians.

The regulations, numerous required components and goals of the Stormwater Management Program require the City to hire additional staff, purchase equipment, and improve our current program. This will require additional funding. The City's current annual funding for the stormwater program is \$1.7 million. An additional \$1.5 million or an estimated program total of more than \$3 million per year is required to be in full compliance and implement a comprehensive program. With our current funding, the City is behind approximately nine months for scheduled maintenance and an estimated 12 years for capital improvement projects.



## Stormwater FAQs

### **Q: Why is stormwater important?**

Stormwater management is mandated by the Clean Water Act of 1972 and helps to ensure clean drinking water for the citizens of our City and State.

### **Q: What is the purpose of the stormwater utility?**

The purpose of a stormwater utility is to provide dedicated funds specifically to the City of Roswell's Stormwater Management Program.

### **Q. Why isn't this considered another "tax"?**

All stormwater user fee revenues must be spent on the Stormwater Management Program whereas tax revenues are pooled together and spent across all City programs.

### **Q. Why is the stormwater utility fee based on impervious surfaces?**

Impervious areas cause stormwater to run-off into streams and rivers rather than soaking into the ground

and recharging the water table. The City is required to manage the stormwater runoff.

### **Q. How does the City determine the impervious surface for each property?**

The City has aerial photographs and maps, which allow the City to determine the impervious area of properties in Roswell.

### **Q. How much is the fee?**

The average home in the City of Roswell will pay approximately \$3.95 per month to fund the Stormwater Management Program.

# Funding the Stormwater Management Program

## What is a Stormwater Utility?

A stormwater utility is a method of generating the required funds to cover the expense of operating the City of Roswell's Stormwater Management program.

The fee paid is based on the amount of impervious surface area on each developed property in the City. Impervious surfaces are those areas that prevent rainfall from infiltrating into the ground. Examples of typical impervious surfaces found on most properties include rooftops, driveways, sidewalks, patios, parking lots, storage sheds, etc. Those properties with less impervious surface will pay less than properties with larger impervious areas

Since the mid 1980's, communities across the country have found that the most equitable option available to fund stormwater programs is through the establishment of a stormwater utility rather than a tax-based program. If you look at the City of Roswell's tax base, 71 percent of the revenue collected in the general fund is from residential properties and 29 percent is from commercial properties. However if you look at the impervious areas (those that generate stormwater runoff) around the city, only 45 percent of them are associated with residential properties and the other 55 percent are from commercial properties. With a stormwater utility fee, those property owners who have more impervious surface will pay more than those with less impervious surface.

## How is my Stormwater Utility Fee Calculated?

The City has developed a rate schedule to ensure equity is reflected in the bills. All residential customers will be divided into four (4) classes based on the amount of impervious surface area on their property.

- Most homes in Roswell fall within the second tier on the chart and will pay \$3.95 per month.

- Residences with up to 3,400 square feet of impervious surface will pay \$2.57 per month.
- Residences with an impervious surface area between 4,951 and 10,000 square feet will pay \$5.92 per month.
- Residences with more than 10,000 square feet of impervious surface will pay a flat rate of \$3.95 for every 4,100 square feet of impervious surface area.
- Commercial properties will receive a bill based on their actual impervious surface area.



### Example: Computing Impervious Area

Rooftop	2,464 square feet
Driveway	1,514 square feet
Backyard Patio	309 square feet
Sidewalk	228 square feet
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,515 square feet</b>

Monthly stormwater fee for 4,515 square feet of Impervious Surface Area is \$3.95.

Billing Class	Impervious Surface Range (square feet)	Billing Units	Rate
Residential Tier 1	Up to 3,400 sf	0.65	\$2.57
Residential Tier 2	3,401-4,950 sf	1.00	\$3.95
Residential Tier 3	4,951-10,000 sf	1.50	\$5.92
Large Residential	More than 10,000 sf	1.00/4,100 sf	\$3.95/4,100 sf
Non-Residential	N/A	1.00/4,100 sf	\$3.95/4,100 sf