

DERRY TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY



Stormwater Management Program

Importance of Stormwater Management in Our Community

Stormwater management involves managing the rain water that is not absorbed by our lawns and gardens (think of water running down your driveway or down your street.) Managing this excess water is important for the protection of life and property against the damage and destruction from heavy rains and flood events as well as to protect and enhance the water quality of our local and regional water resources. Because we all contribute to the problem, proper stormwater management benefits all of us and our community. It can promote benefits by reducing costs for correcting the harmful impacts to streams, enhance water quality, provide recreational opportunities, and help limit property damage and loss of life related to increased stormwater runoff.

Increasing Regulatory Requirements

In the United States, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is charged with regulating stormwater pursuant to the Clean Water Act (CWA). Portions of the stormwater requirements of the federal CWA are administered under the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer (MS4) Program. As part of its MS4 permit, the Township of Derry is required to comply within a framework of the following six minimum control measures:

1. Public education and outreach
2. Public participation and involvement
3. Illicit discharge detection and elimination
4. Construction site runoff control
5. Post-construction storm water management in new development and redevelopment
6. Pollution prevention and good housekeeping for municipal operations and maintenance

MS4 permits are renewed in approximately five year cycles. With the renewal of its permit scheduled for 2018, new requirements for stormwater management will be built into the Township of Derry's permit.

Under Section 2.g. of its current MS4 permit, the Township is required to *"maintain adequate funding and staffing to implement and manage all provisions of ... (its) Stormwater Management Program."*



Proper stormwater management is considered to be a vital infrastructure asset in order to protect the public health, properties, and downstream waterways from adverse effects that can result from stormwater runoff.



Authorization for Authorities to Manage Stormwater Programs

Due to increasing environmental regulations, capital improvement needs, and the desire to provide communities a more equitable means to recover the cost of stormwater service, Pennsylvania Act 68 of 2013 was signed into law by then Governor Corbett. The bill amended the Municipal Authorities Act to state the purpose and powers of municipal authorities can include stormwater management, planning and projects.

In January 2016, the Township of Derry authorized the expansion of the purpose and powers of Derry Township Municipal Authority (DTMA) to include ownership and operation, of stormwater facilities located within the Township. This transition of the stormwater program from the Township to Authority provides for greater efficiencies in operation while eliminating competition with the other traditional services provided by the Township such as police, public works, and recreation. DTMA has the ability to more equitably distribute the costs of stormwater management services to properties within the community based upon impervious surface and the amount of stormwater runoff from each property. A residential and commercial fee is being evaluated to support this program. Once established, all revenue collected will be solely used for the operation, management, and improvement of DTMA's stormwater facilities.



Goals and Benefits of DTMA's Stormwater Management Program

Township residents and businesses will benefit from the enhanced operation and maintenance of a stormwater infrastructure that controls pollution and reduces flooding. The goals of DTMA's Stormwater Management Program include:

- Improve local water quality
- Compliance with the existing stormwater permit and increased state law requirements for the proper operation of the system.
- Enhance operation and maintenance of stormwater assets to save money by extending their useful life.
- Assess the condition of the existing infrastructure to make sure it meets current and future needs and strategically implement improvements in the most cost effective manner.
- Develop a dedicated and reliable funding source outside the common tax base.
- Implement a fair and equitable allocation of costs to property owners in the Township.
- Educate the community on proper stormwater management including techniques and practices to assist property owners with minimizing the quantity of stormwater runoff leaving their property.

Role of Citizens

Proper stormwater management requires a joint partnership between DTMA and the community. As a property owner, you can do your part to reduce pollution of our local waterways through the following:

- Do not dispose of rags, leaves, debris, paint, toxic substances, or any other waste materials into stormwater drains. Think “**Only Rain in the Drain.**”
- Do not over fertilize your lawn. Have a soil test before you apply fertilizer and follow the instructions.
- Utilize curbside recycling in your neighborhood.
- Wash your car on the grass, not a hard surface. Take your car to the carwash where they recycle the water.
- Pick up pet wastes and dispose of them in the trash. Always carry a plastic bag with you when you walk your dog.
- Install a **rain barrel** at your home and use the collected water for your flower beds, landscaping, and gardens.
- Do not flush wash waters or wastewaters into the storm drain.
- Keep our sewers “FOG-FREE.” FOG stands for fats, oils and grease. Avoid putting FOG down the drain where it builds up and blocks the pipes.



Stakeholder Advisory Committee

The Derry Township Municipal Authority (DTMA) members and the Township of Derry Supervisors feel the best approach to stormwater management is through a partnership with the citizens, businesses, industries, and institutions in the Township. Development of that partnership resulted in the creation of a stormwater Stakeholders' Advisory Committee (SAC), which was formed in December 2015, to provide technical and value based input on stormwater issues in the Township. The SAC serves as a sounding board on matters related to the stormwater management program and issues. It also offers the opportunity to collaborate and network together on stormwater related topics that affect the Township, as well as to serve as liaisons between DTMA and the community. The SAC is comprised of representatives of the residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional sectors, and charged with:

- Providing feedback on the Authority's Stormwater Program, including stormwater facility needs and level of service.
- Recommending stormwater spending priorities.
- Evaluating the proposed Stormwater Program Fee structure and implementation.
- Evaluating the Appeal Process and Credit Policy.
- Engaging and educating the public .



Frequently Asked Questions

How do I affect stormwater runoff?

Stormwater management involves managing rain water that is not absorbed by our lawns and gardens. Impervious surface on your property may impact the quantity of stormwater runoff that will be managed by DTMA. Also, household tasks such as car washing and use of fertilizer can impact stormwater quality. All residents utilize the stormwater system and everyone should play a role in supporting its maintenance and up-keep.

Doesn't the Township already have a stormwater system in place? Nothing has changed on my property, so why will I be charged now?

The Township has had a stormwater system in place for many years. However in recent years, there has been an increased emphasis on stormwater management. New and revised state and federal regulations require a comprehensive stormwater quality and management program. Derry Township and DTMA have been working together to address these new regulations. The stormwater program fee ensures that DTMA receives adequate financial support to meet its responsibilities to manage the stormwater system more closely, identify and eliminate illegal discharges, provide public education, and other regulatory requirements. The fee will also be used to cover the cost for increased inspection and maintenance of aging infrastructure, implementation of flood reduction projects and the ability to rehabilitate/replace infrastructure that's reached the end of its useful life.

How much is the Stormwater Program Fee (SWPF)?

All residents with impervious surfaces on their property will pay a fee. The amount will differ between residential and non-residential properties. The residential properties will be billed a tiered flat rate which is projected to be from \$6 to \$10 per month, which is equal to one Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU). The non-residential properties will pay a multiple of the ERU based on the amount of impervious surface on the property.

Does everyone in the Township pay the fee, including non-profits?

The fee will be paid by all property owners who own developed property in the Township, whose property has impervious surfaces (roofs, driveways, sidewalks, walkways, roads, parking lots, etc.). Non-profits will pay because it is a fee and not a property tax. Property taxes are based on the assessed value of the property and the stormwater program fee is based on how much a property contributes to stormwater runoff. Tax-exempt properties are required to pay for other utility charges including electric, water and sewer and the stormwater program fee is no different.

How did you come up with the cost of the Stormwater Program Fee?

The Stormwater Program Fee (SWPF) is the result of discussions between DTMA, the Township of Derry and the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC). Importance of stormwater management, level of service and stormwater needs were all considered. In addition, a list of known problems, scheduled stormwater improvements, and future projects necessary to comply with future regulatory requirements was used to project stormwater management expenses over the next 5 to 10 years. These overall stormwater system costs were divided by the number of ERUs to come up with the Stormwater Program Fee.

How will properties be billed?

For those properties with an existing sewer bill from DTMA, the stormwater program fee will appear as a separate line item on your existing bill. For those without a current sewer bill from DTMA, a new monthly stormwater bill will be issued.

Where does the money collected from the stormwater program fee go?

All stormwater revenue will be placed into a dedicated fund used only for the operation, maintenance, and improvement of DTMA's stormwater system. The funds will cover costs associated with the following:

- Operation and Maintenance of Stormwater Infrastructure – DTMA will own roughly 350,000 linear feet of stormwater pipeline, 3,500 inlets, and related infrastructure. Enhanced maintenance of these facilities is necessary to reduce flooding, improve public safety and extend the useful life of the asset.
- Regulatory Compliance – DTMA is required by state and federal regulations to reduce stormwater pollution, and improve water quality for local streams.
- Capital Improvement Projects – Over \$27 million in stormwater improvement needs has been identified through planning efforts. DTMA will complete capital improvement planning to ensure dollars are invested in cost effective solutions to protect citizens and the environment.