

1. What is stormwater runoff?

Stormwater runoff is water that flows over our yards, streets, buildings, parking lots, swimming pools and other surfaces when it rains. Stormwater runoff flows into the nearest waters and eventually ends up in our local streams, ponds, lakes, rivers, and oceans.

2. Why do we have a stormwater user charge?

The City of Newark (City) has a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4 system) that conveys stormwater to the City's surface waters. Due to this MS4 system, the City has federal obligations under the Clean Water Act which apply city-wide, even to areas that may or may not drain directly to our MS4 system. In addition, the City maintains stormwater management facilities designed to help manage both the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff. The City's stormwater charge is intended to fund our Clean Water Act obligations and the repair and maintenance of the stormwater system including the storm sewer, management facilities and other stormwater structures that help prevent flooding and minimize pollutants entering local streams, ponds, lakes, rivers and ocean.

3. If my stormwater runoff does not flow into the streets or City stormwater system and flows directly into a river, should I still pay the stormwater charge?

Yes. The City is responsible for the stormwater management of its MS4 system and for maintaining water quality in the surface waters. The City's stormwater management program benefits everyone in the City by protecting the City streets and properties from flooding, erosion, pollution problems, property damage, and protects the City's surface waters. Therefore, all parcels in the City are required to pay a stormwater charge.

4. What is a Parcel?

"Parcel" means any real property, either developed or undisturbed, which is assigned a tax parcel number by New Castle County.

5. Is my Stormwater charge based on my water consumption?

The stormwater charge is NOT based on your monthly Water Consumption. The stormwater charge is based on the **Impervious Area** estimated for your parcel.

6. What is the basis of my stormwater charge?

The stormwater charge is based on the impervious area (in square feet) that is estimated for your parcel.

7. What is Impervious Area?

"Impervious Area" means the total square feet of any hard surface area, including buildings, any attached or detached structures, and paved or hardscaped areas, that either prevents or restricts the volume of stormwater that can enter into the soil, and thereby causes water to run off the surface. Surfaces such as compacted dirt and gravel are also considered as impervious area.

8. What is an ESU?

An Equivalent Stormwater Unit or ESU is the median amount of impervious area associated with single family residential properties in Newark. Based on this approach, the ESU for the City was calculated to be 1,620 square feet of impervious area. The ESU is utilized as the standard billing unit for all customer classes (including residential, non-residential, and condominium properties). The number of ESUs associated with your parcel is calculated by dividing the estimated impervious area square footage of your parcel by 1,620 square feet.

9. How are stormwater parcels classified?

Parcels are classified into three major categories: Residential, Condominiums, and Non-residential. Every parcel within the City is assigned a stormwater class based on the primary Occupancy Code designated in the New Castle County tax assessment system. New Castle County assigns a primary Occupancy Code to your parcel based on what you are using your parcel for.

For example, if your parcel is assigned a condominium land use code by New Castle County, then your parcel will be assigned a Condominium ("CNDL") stormwater class. A runoff factor (see next question for an example calculation) will be assigned to your parcel to determine impervious area.

10. How is the impervious area calculated for my parcel?

A two-step process is used to calculate your parcel's impervious area:

- (i) First, your parcel is assigned to the Condominium stormwater class that the City has defined.
- (ii) Second, the impervious area is estimated for your entire Condominium Complex parcel. The impervious area for your condominium complex parcel is computed as the sum of the following :
 - Actual footprint of the main building(s)
 - Estimated area of paved surface such as private roads and parking lots
 - Estimated area of any ancillary structures around the main building(s)

Example:

- The Condominium Complex has a total building(s) footprint of 55,186 Sq. Ft.
- The impervious area surrounding the main building(s) is estimated (using Geographic Information System) to be 11,403 Sq. Ft.
- For the condominium complex, the total estimated **Impervious Area = 55,186 + 11,403 = 66,589 Sq. Ft.**

11. How is the Stormwater Rate defined?

The monthly stormwater rate is defined as a rate per ESU (i.e. \$/ESU). The City's estimated monthly stormwater rate is \$2.95/ESU.

12. How is the monthly Stormwater Charge calculated for the Condominium parcel?

For a Condominium parcel, the stormwater charge is calculated for the entire parcel using the following three steps:

- (i) **ESU Factor** is calculated: Total impervious area square footage divided by 1,620 (ESU);
- (ii) **Billable ESUs** are calculated: ESU Factor less any Stormwater Credits;
- (iii) **Monthly Stormwater Charge** is calculated: Billable ESUs multiplied by \$2.95/ESU.

Example:

Using the same Condominium Complex example from Question 10, and assuming there are no stormwater credits for this Condominium parcel, the monthly stormwater charge is calculated as follows:

- The **Total Impervious Area** = 66,589 Sq. Ft.
- The **ESU Factor** = $66,589 \div 1,620 = 41.10$ ESUs
- The **Billable ESUs** = $41.10 - 0 = 41.10$ ESUs
- The **Monthly Stormwater Charge** = $41.10 \times \$2.95 = \121.25

13. How is the stormwater charge calculated for an individual condominium unit?

The City does not calculate the stormwater charge for an individual condominium unit. The City calculates the Monthly Stormwater Charge for an entire Condominium Complex parcel and sends the bill to the Condominium Association. It is up to the Condominium Association to allocate the bill amount among the individual condominium unit owners.

14. My parcel is tax exempt. Do I still have to pay the stormwater charge?

Yes. The stormwater charge is a “User Fee” similar to your water, sewer, and electric charges. The stormwater charge is not a tax. Therefore, all tax exempt parcels that are within the City limits have to pay the stormwater charge.

15. What if I believe my stormwater charge to be incorrect?

The City has a stormwater fee appeals program to address customer concerns regarding stormwater charge and related data. Additional details on the stormwater appeals process will be provided in the City’s website.

16. Is there any way to reduce my stormwater charge?

Yes, your property may be eligible for a stormwater credit if you can prove through documentation that stormwater runoff or a portion of it from your parcel is managed on-site. Additional details on stormwater credits program will be provided in the City’s website.

17. How can I find out more about the stormwater charge?

The City is planning a series of educational events during the Fall of 2017, prior to the stormwater fee going into effect. Additional information will also be made available in the City’s website.

18. When will the stormwater charge go into effect?

The City anticipates the stormwater charge will go into effect at the beginning of 2018. Your condominium association will receive a monthly stormwater charge beginning January 2018.