

What is stormwater runoff?

Stormwater runoff is generated from rain and snowmelt that flows over land or impervious (hard) surfaces, such as paved or gravel streets, parking lots, and building rooftops. It does not soak into the ground. The runoff picks up pollutants, then carries them to our streams, lakes and Puget Sound.

To protect these resources, communities, construction companies, and industries use stormwater best management practices to filter out pollutants and/or prevent pollution by controlling it at its source.



What is an impervious surface?

Impervious surfaces are non-vegetated surface areas that either slow down or keep water from soaking into the soil as it would under natural conditions (prior to development).

Impervious surfaces include:

- Rooftops
- Walkways
- Patios
- Paved driveways
- Parking lots or storage areas
- Concrete or asphalt paving
- Gravel roads or driveways
- Packed earthen areas
- Oiled, macadam or other surfaces that impede the natural infiltration of stormwater. Lawns and other turf areas like sports fields can also act like impervious surfaces due to compaction.



[Title 12 definitions 12.08 Definitions](#)

How is the impervious surface measured?

The County measures impervious surface using as-built drawings, aerial imagery and site assessment. GIS (Geographic Information System) is also used to compute impervious surface area.

What does the stormwater program do?

The Stormwater program protects people, property and natural resources by reducing flooding, managing stormwater runoff and treating stormwater pollution.

When did the stormwater program begin?

The Stormwater program was established in 1993 by the Kitsap County Board of Commissioners (Ordinance 156-1993) and was originally called the Surface and Stormwater Management Program. In 2014 it was rebranded as the [Clean Water Kitsap](#) (CWK) program. The Clean Water Kitsap program is a partnership between Kitsap County Public Works, Kitsap Conservation District, WSU-Extension, Kitsap Public Health District and Kitsap Public Utility District.



Partners in Stormwater Solutions

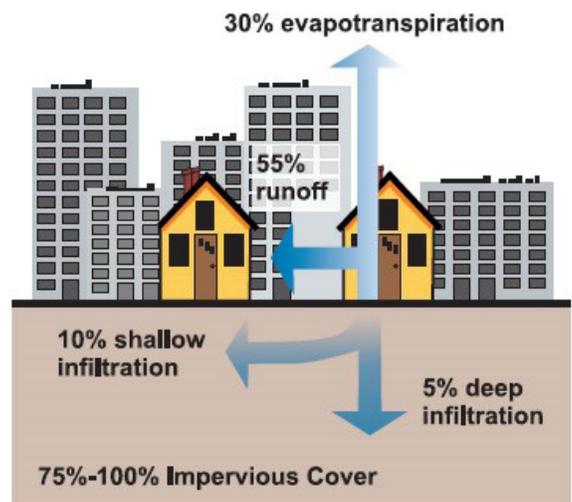
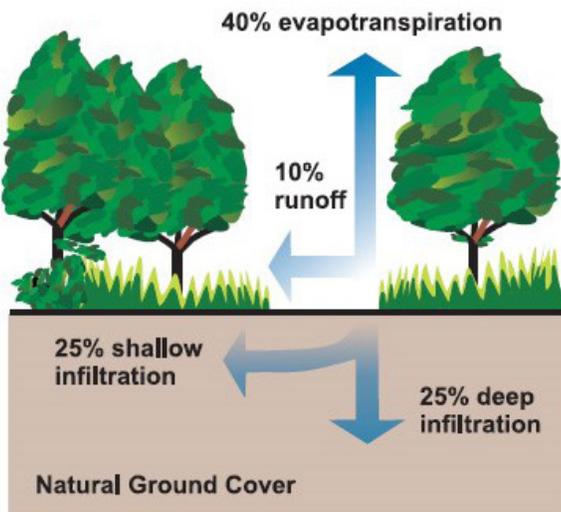


What is the Water as a Resource Policy?

In 2009 the Kitsap County Board of Commissioners adopted the "Water as a Resource" policy. (Resolution 134-2016). The guiding principles of this policy are to preserve and conserve water, reduce pollution, and to treat water as a resource not a waste stream. The Stormwater Program works under these principles to maintain stormwater assets, develop codes that support the policy, provide public education and report on the program.

How does runoff contribute to flooding and water pollution?

When rain falls faster than it can soak into the ground, it becomes runoff. When more runoff reaches creeks and wetlands than they can hold, they flood.



Stormwater runoff isn't just muddy, it's dirty too. It can carry animal waste, chemicals, oils and trash into surface waters.



What will the stormwater program do to prevent pollution and local flooding?

The program builds new regional and neighborhood facilities, and improves existing stormwater facilities, to reduce flooding, improve water quality, increase fish passage and provide habitat.

Kitsap County Stormwater Division operates and maintains over 225 miles of stormwater pipes, over 11,000 storm drains/catch basins, 500+ stormwater ponds and other facilities that manage the flow of stormwater runoff. Staff also performs inspections and monitoring to prevent pollution and respond to spills.



What is the stormwater utility fee used for?

Your stormwater utility fee is an investment in infrastructure. It pays for a variety of services and projects that reduce the impacts of flooding and water pollution, such as stormwater parks, water quality treatment systems and regional stormwater treatment facilities. Your investment also supports education and outreach efforts, capital projects, operations and maintenance and the Clean Water Kitsap partnership.

The money collected from the stormwater utility fee is placed into an Enterprise Fund. This means it can only be used for stormwater related services and projects. It does not go into the General Fund.

How much do I pay in stormwater utility fees for my residential property?

The fee for a single family residence (SFR) is established by the Board of County Commissioners. It is charged on a per unit basis called an Equivalent Service Unit (ESU). The single family residence fee is equal to 1 ESU. Our SFR fee is one of the lowest in the region.



How much does a business or commercial property have to pay in stormwater utility fees?

The service fee for commercial properties is based on the measured impervious surface area divided by the square footage of one ESU.

Here's an example of how the utility fee is calculated:

A parking lot with one acre of impervious surface area would be charged 10 ESU (*the value is rounded to the nearest whole number*):

$$\mathbf{1 \text{ acre (43, 560 sq. ft) divided by 1 ESU (4200 sq/ft) = 10 ESU}$$

Why do I have to pay the fee if I don't have any drainage or flooding on my property?

Even if you don't have drainage or flooding problems on your property, you benefit from the stormwater facilities located throughout Kitsap County. These stormwater systems operate to prevent flooding and pollution for the benefit of all properties including roads and other public facilities.

According to state law stormwater control facilities are "of general benefit to all of the residents" and are necessary to "protect life and property throughout the county." Kitsap County's stormwater utility fee is based on RCW 36.89.080.

Do I have to pay the fee if I rent or lease an apartment or condominium?

No. Your landlord or condominium association pays the fee because it is based on the impervious surface area of the apartment building or condominium, plus other hard surfaces like parking lots or sidewalks.

Can I get an incentive and/or reduction of the fee?

Single-family residences cannot reduce their utility fee, but can receive a \$1,500 cost share incentive to install a rain garden or other green stormwater solution to help with drainage on their property.

[Clean Water Kitsap Rain Garden Program](#)

Commercial properties can get a 50% reduction of their fee under certain conditions. Fee reductions can be granted to properties that show that they are rainwater harvesting, or provide full infiltration or direct discharge to tidally influenced waters. For more information, see Title 12.40.

[12.40 Storm Water Management Program Rate Structure](#)

How often/when will I get a bill?

Once a year. The stormwater utility fee is included on your annual property tax statement. Properties that do not receive a property tax statement will receive a separate rate and service charge billing statement.



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