

STORMWATER UTILITY FEE

Frequently Asked Questions

History of the Program

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of Colorado enacted regulations that require cities to obtain a Stormwater Permit. The City's Stormwater Utility funds the necessary programs under the Stormwater Permit to address or clean-up potential pollution before stormwater carries it to streams, thus improving the quality of water in area lakes and streams. Since January 2002, residents and businesses in the City limits of Arvada have been required to pay a Stormwater Utility fee. This fee is charged on water/wastewater bills. Arvada is one of more than 30 other cities in Colorado that have established a Stormwater Utility.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is stormwater?

Rain and snow melt flows across streets, driveways and rooftops and ends up in Arvada's streams, lakes, ditches and canals. This water flow picks up debris, sediment, bacteria and nutrients on sidewalks, streets and parking lots and washes into gutters, through storm drains. Eventually, it flows, untreated, into the creeks. Other sources of water include over-irrigation, car wash water, or any other activity that results in water flowing into the gutters.

Why is it important to manage stormwater?

Managing stormwater can

1. Reduce flood risks that may impact public safety and loss or damage of property; and
2. Prevent polluted stormwater from flowing directly into rivers and streams.

What types of infrastructure projects are funded by this fee?

The types of infrastructure projects the Stormwater Utility funds include construction and upgrade of channels, culverts, storm sewers and other tributary improvements. Between 2009 and 2018, the City of Arvada has completed 10 Stormwater Capital Improvement Projects in 126 locations across the City.

How much is the Stormwater Utility Fee?

The approved monthly Stormwater fee is \$0.00152 per square foot (\$1.52 per 1,000 square feet) of impervious area. Because utility bills are sent every other month, the charge on the bill represents two months.

How is the Stormwater Utility Fee calculated?

To estimate the bimonthly stormwater utility fee, multiply the length and width of each impervious area, such as the rooftop, driveway, and sidewalk. Add them together and multiply the total area by \$0.003034 ($\0.00152×2)

account for bimonthly billing).

Typical Single Family Home Example:

Step 1: Calculate the total square feet of impervious area.

1,100 sq ft (roof)

+750 sq ft (driveway)

+300 sq ft (patio)

+100 sq ft (sidewalk) =

2,250 sq ft total impervious area

Step 2: Calculate the corresponding SWU fee: the total square footage of impervious surface is multiplied by the rate (\$0.00152/sq ft)

2,250 sq ft

× \$0.003034/sq ft =

\$6.83/bimonthly

Why has the square footage of impervious area changed on my bill?

The City is required by code to perform an assessment of impervious surfaces (parking surfaces, structures and walkways) at least every 10 years. We recently performed a detailed assessment of every property in the city to determine 2020 stormwater fees. While the fee per square foot has not changed, some property owners may see changes in their bill.

Is there a way to reduce my stormwater fee?

Fees can be reduced through the replacement of excess impervious area with landscaped greenspace.

I believe the amount of impervious surface listed on my bill is incorrect. What can I do?

If you believe the amount of impervious area calculated for your property is in error, call 720-898-7070 with the corrected impervious area for staff review, verification and/or adjustment.

Why does my neighbor/friend pay more/less than I do?

The Stormwater Utility Fee is a fixed rate. The actual fee amount is based on the total amount of impervious area on a property, which varies from property to property.

What can residents do to protect our waterways?

1. Sweep up grass clippings and leaves.
2. Always clean-up after your pets!
3. Control erosion of soil.
4. Wash your car on the lawn, where suds can absorb into the soil.
5. Always throw trash into a trashcan.
6. Avoid over fertilizing your yard, use only the manufacturers' recommended applications.
7. Control and properly dispose of all automotive waste, especially oil and antifreeze.
8. Never wash anything out in the storm drain, not paint, plaster, concrete or lawn mowers.
9. Dispose of or recycle hazardous materials properly. Contact Rooney Road Recycling Center www.rooneyroadrecycling.org/ to make an appointment to dispose of household chemical waste.