

Last Revised: October 2, 2017

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 Customers classified?

Parcels are classified into three major categories: Residential, Condominiums, and Non-residential. Non-residential parcels are assigned to one of eleven non-residential stormwater classes based on the parcel’s land use code. 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.

10. How is the Impervious Area of a Parcel estimated for Residential Properties?

Impervious Area for Residential properties is estimated based on the square footage of buildings (including all attached and detached structures) as reflected in the New Castle County tax assessment system. For each residential property, the parcel’s total impervious area is computed based on the following:

- Impervious Area = Actual footprint of the building + plus footprint of any attached structure + footprint of any detached structures in the parcel.

Example:

- A parcel has a Single Family home with an actual main floor footprint of 1,500 Sq. Ft., an attached garage of 200 Sq. Ft., and a detached outbuilding of 200 Sq. Ft.
- The estimated Impervious Area = 1,500 + 200 + 200 = 1,900 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 a parcel that is assigned to the Residential class, the Monthly Stormwater Fee is determined as follows:

- First the total impervious area for a property is calculated (see question 10).
- Second, the parcel is assigned to one of four “Tiers” based upon the total impervious area (See table). Note:
 - The City has assigned an **ESU Factor** for each Tier to recognize the difference in impervious area among the tiers.
 - The **Monthly Fee** for each tier is calculated based on the ESU Factor X the ESU Rate.
- Finally, the parcel is billed based upon the Monthly Fee associated with its assigned tier.

| Tier | Impervious Area (Square Feet) | ESU Factor | Monthly Fee |
|------|-------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 1 | 0 to 1,289 | 0.60 | \$1.77 |
| 2 | 1,290 to 1,950 | 1.00 | \$2.95 |
| 3 | 1,951 to 2,610 | 1.30 | \$3.84 |
| 4 | 2,611 or more | 1.80 | \$5.31 |

Example:

- A parcel has a single-family home with an actual footprint of 1,500 Sq. Ft., an attached garage of 200 Sq. Ft., a detached outbuilding of 200 Sq. Ft.
- The estimated **Impervious Area = 1,500 + 200 + 200 = 1,900 Sq. Ft.**
- The parcel is assigned to **Tier 2** (1,290 to 1,950 Sq. Ft.)
- The assigned **ESU Factor** for Tier 2 is 1.00.
- The Monthly Stormwater Charge for Tier 2 is **\$2.95**

13. 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.

14. 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.

15. When will the stormwater fee go into effect?

The City anticipates the stormwater charge will go into effect at the beginning of 2018. The stormwater charge will appear as a separate line item on your January 2018 water/sewer utility bill.