



North Lebanon Township Storm Water Management Fee Program

What is the storm water management fee?

A storm water management fee was established by North Lebanon Township to ensure Township-owned storm water management facilities are well-maintained and to pay for the implementation of programs and facilities designed to reduce storm water pollution. Storm water pollution is a Township-wide issue that must be properly managed to improve the quality of our local waterways. The operation and maintenance of a municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) is expensive, especially when federal and state regulatory requirements concerning water quality are considered.



Why is a storm water management fee necessary?

North Lebanon Township, like many local municipalities, must comply with state and federal MS4 mandates to reduce storm water pollution. Compliance with these unfunded mandates is expected to cost the Township over \$2,000,000 over the next five years. Through the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) have imposed new regulations to require the clean-up of our impaired waterways, including the Quittapahilla Creek, Susquehanna River, Chesapeake Bay, and Delaware River so they are safe for their designated uses, such as public water supply and recreation. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulations require MS4 permittees, such as North Lebanon Township, to take specific actions to manage storm water pollution.

Prior to the 2018 MS4 permit renewal, North Lebanon Township was able to fund its storm water management program through normal tax collections. Under the new permit, the Township is required to develop and implement a Pollutant Reduction Plan (PRP) designed to reduce pollutant loads carried by storm water runoff to the Township's impaired waterways. Sediment discharges must be reduced by 10 percent over the next five years. Implementation of the PRP will dramatically increase the cost of the Township's MS4 program and tax revenue is not sufficient to pay the expected costs.

Why are property owners paying a storm water fee instead of a tax?

In Pennsylvania, Second Class Townships are authorized to assess fees to construct, operate and maintain storm water management facilities, systems and management plans. A fee is necessary for the Township to fund its storm water management program since tax revenues are not enough to cover costs brought about by the new regulations.

Storm water management fees collected by the Township must be spent specifically on storm water services and facilities. Revenue from tax collections, such as the property tax, are used to fund most of the Township's general services, such as police protection, road maintenance, code enforcement and administration. However, tax-exempt properties also generate storm water runoff and are subject to the fee. The revenue collected will enable the Township to administer its storm water management program and build the capital improvements necessary to reduce storm water pollution.

Who will pay the storm water management Fee?

Storm water management fees are assessed on all properties in the Township with at least 300 square feet of impervious cover. Impervious cover includes buildings, driveways, parking lots, sidewalks, patios, decks, tennis courts, etc. Stone surfaces are also considered impervious.

How is the storm water management fee calculated?

All properties in North Lebanon Township have been classified either as “Single-Family Residential” (SFR) or “Non-Single Family Residential” (non-SFR) based on the use of the property. The average amount of impervious area on a SFR property is called an Equivalent Residential Unit, or ERU. One ERU is 3,755 square feet in North Lebanon Township. All SFR properties are charged for one (1) ERU. All non-SFR properties are charged multiple ERUs based on the total impervious area on the property. For example, a property with 37,550 square feet of impervious area would be charged for ten (10) ERUs. The Township’s annual stormwater budget of over \$400,000 was divided equally among all ERUs, arriving at a cost of \$40.14 per ERU per year.

Why is impervious area being used to determine the fee?

Impervious areas consist of all “hard” surfaces such as rooftops, driveways, parking lots, sidewalks, concrete, stone, or gravel which prevent water from soaking into the ground. These surfaces increase both the rate and volume of storm water runoff reaching local streams. The excess runoff picks up pollutants such as trash, debris, sediment, oil, fertilizers, pesticides, and other chemicals along the way. Impervious areas are the focus of the storm water management fee because they are the primary source of pollution in developed watersheds, accounting for eight (8) times more pollutants than undeveloped areas.

How will North Lebanon Township spend the money generated?

The revenue generated by the storm water management fee will allow North Lebanon Township to meet federal and state storm water regulations, operate and maintain the MS4, and fund drainage improvement projects. The Township is prohibited by Act 62 from spending the money for any purpose not related to the MS4 program.

I’d like to understand more. Where can I find additional information on the stormwater management fee?

North Lebanon Township is committed to being as transparent as possible and continues to work in the best interest of all Township residents and property owners. The Township is assisting property owners in understanding the storm water management fee by providing a Stormwater Management Fee FAQ document at www.northlebanontwppa.gov

How can I reduce my bill?

The Township is offering storm water management fee credits to property owners who install stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) or maintain existing BMPs. Eligible BMPs include, but are not limited to: detention and retention basins, infiltration trenches, and vegetated swales. Single-family residences are eligible for up to a 100% BMP credit and non-single family residential property owners are eligible for up to a 50% BMP credit. Properties used for agriculture and having a single-family residence may qualify for an Agricultural Homestead Exclusion credit, which ensures that the impervious areas associated ONLY with the single-family residence are assessed one ERU. The Credit Manual and Application Form may be obtained from the Township.



Rain garden BMP at the North Lebanon Township Yardwaste Recycling Facility

How will the billing be handled for rental properties?

The bill will go to the property owner. It will be up to the property owner to decide how or if the tenants should share in the payment.

Can I appeal the storm water management fee?

A property owner who believes that the impervious area calculation and/or the classification of their property is incorrect, may appeal the stormwater management fee, as can owners of two SFR properties that are adjacent and only have one house between properties. Additional information on appeals and the appeal form are available from the Township.