

# Stormwater Utility Program

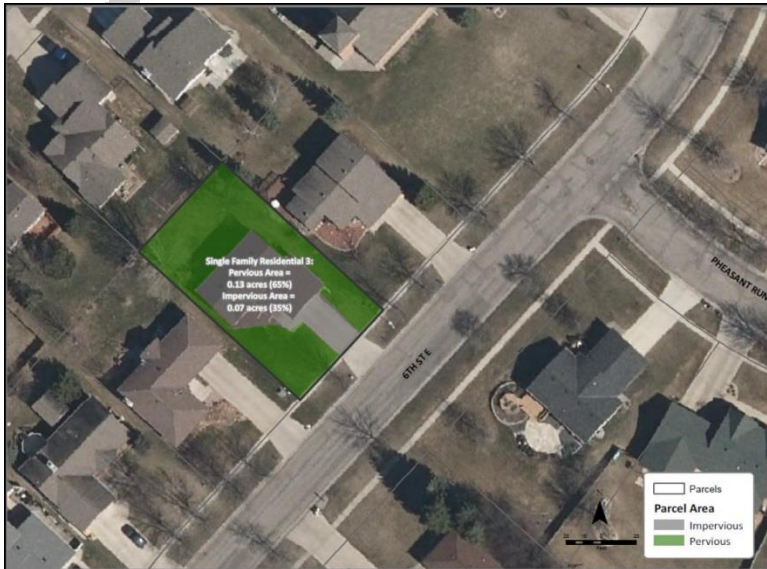
## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is stormwater runoff?

Stormwater runoff is the water that flows off of roofs, driveways, parking lots, streets, and other hard surfaces during rain events and snowmelt. The water that flows off of grass surfaces and wooded areas that is not absorbed into the soil is also considered stormwater runoff. Rainwater and snowmelt that is not absorbed into the ground flows into ditches, culverts, and surface water and stormwater system, and does not receive any treatment to remove pollutants before entering our rivers and streams.

### What is impervious area?

Impervious area is defined as area covered by hard surfaces such as driveways, buildings, roofs, pavement, compacted gravel, concrete, or other man-made features that prevent, restrict, or impede the downward passage of stormwater into the underlying soil.



The figure at right illustrates both the impervious area of a residential property (house, driveway, path) and the pervious area (grassy area).

*Figure 1 - Impervious Area Example*

### Why does Jamestown need to manage its stormwater runoff?

Stormwater runoff needs to be managed just as any other process in the city is managed, such as water treatment, sanitary collection, roads, or solid waste systems. Management is essential to protect the quality of the waterways we use for drinking water supplies, recreational activities, and for the environment. Stormwater also needs to be managed to ensure heavy rainfall or rapid snowmelt does not put public safety or private property at risk due to flooding or erosion.



## **Why is a Stormwater Utility Rate necessary?**

The City of Jamestown is adopting a Stormwater Utility Rate to fund the City's Stormwater Program. A Stormwater Utility Rate is a rate for service based on the total property area and the amount of impervious area on a property that prevents rainfall or snowmelt from soaking into the ground. The rate for each property is determined by the size of the property and the amount of impervious area that causes stormwater to run off rather than soaking into the ground.

## **Why is Jamestown adopting a Stormwater Utility Rate?**

The primary benefit to implementing a Stormwater Utility Rate is to fairly distribute the cost of the community's stormwater services across all eligible properties based on the property's contribution to stormwater runoff. These services include everything from cleaning city-owned stormwater, to street sweeping, plowing, and infrastructure management.

## **How did Jamestown previously pay for its stormwater services before the utility was created?**

Prior to the creation of Jamestown's stormwater utility rate, stormwater initiatives were mainly funded through the operating budgets of the Water, Sanitary Collection, and Street Departments. Some properties are tax-exempt; therefore charging a rate to all property owners is more equitable than funding stormwater maintenance with property taxes.

## **How much funding will Jamestown's Stormwater Utility collect annually?**

The stormwater utility rate will be structured to generate adequate revenue for the maintenance of the community's stormwater system and eventually help fund projects to improve the stormwater infrastructure system. It is anticipated that the utility will generate approximately \$500,000 per year.

## **How did the City determine the monthly Stormwater Utility Rate for each property?**

Non-residential properties are subject to specific calculations based on land use and a calculated run-off weighting factor. The average run-off weighting factor for non-residential properties is 19.25. The minimal monthly stormwater utility rate is \$3.00.

For residential properties, the run-off weighting factor is an average of single family residential samples. The average run-off weighting factor for non-residential properties is 10.75. All residential including vacant properties pay a flat \$3.00 monthly rate regardless of total land area.

## **Who is responsible for paying the city utilities owed on a property?**

Like other city utilities, the stormwater utility will be charged on the utility bill. The property owner is ultimately responsible to pay city utilities accrued and owed.

## **Do other North Dakota cities have stormwater utilities and charge a Stormwater Utility Rate?**

Eight other communities in North Dakota currently have a stormwater utility rate.