

## Drainage & Flooding

It's not uncommon for many areas of the City to experience street flooding during heavy rainfall. Normally, the water will drain in a relatively short time, but if there are obstructions and blockages in the drainage systems, more serious flooding may occur.

Residents are encouraged to keep debris out of ditches and pipes. Litter, leaves, lawn clippings and pine needles all contribute to problems with drainage systems. When residents periodically clean the ditches and driveway pipes around their property, stormwater runoff is allowed to drain away from streets, homes and businesses.

## Reporting Contamination

Help us keep our City clean! if you observe contamination of our storm drains or waterways, please write down the location, date, time, a description of the suspects and their license plate number and call (757) 382-CITY to report the incident.

## Speaker's Bureau

Do you have a Civic League, neighborhood group or other organization that would like to hear more about stormwater in your neighborhood? Public Works has many experts available to speak at your meeting. We also have educational experiments available to Chesapeake schools and other children's organizations. For brochures or to book a speaker, please contact the Public Works Information Specialist at (757) 382-6983.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why do I have to pay a stormwater fee?

Stormwater management is a state and federally mandated program which requires the City to regulate stormwater in an effort to reduce pollution.

### How will the revenue be used?

All revenue will be used exclusively to support the stormwater program by:

- performing maintenance of drainage facilities to remove pollutants in stormwater runoff
- analyzing stormwater for levels of pollutants
- planning, designing and implementing pollution reduction programs
- inspecting construction sites for erosion and sediment controls to limit the amount of sediment reaching local waterways
- inspecting sites for illegal connections into the storm drain system
- managing public education and awareness programs
- managing the structural integrity of pipes, ditches and other infrastructures
- increasing the system capacity as appropriate to reduce the risk of flooding

### How are residential property fees determined?

Each residence is billed a flat rate. Residential properties include single family homes, mobile homes, multi-family dwellings and condominiums.

### What is an ERU?

An Equivalent Residential Unit is equal to the average impervious area determined from all residential units in the City. The base ERU equals 2,112 square feet.

### How are non-residential property fees determined?

To determine the monthly fee, calculate the total impervious area (buildings, parking lots and sidewalks) and divide by 2,112 sq.ft. (one ERU). The total number of ERUs on the site is then multiplied by the flat residential rate.

### What is a BMP credit?

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are devices used for on-site control of stormwater runoff and provide water quality improvements. Examples of BMPs include wet retention ponds, dry retention ponds, grass swales with check dams and infiltration devices. Non-residential property owners who use BMPs can apply for a credit in stormwater fees. For additional BMP Credit information, visit the Public Works webpage at [www.CityofChesapeake.net](http://www.CityofChesapeake.net).

**For more information on stormwater fees visit [www.CityofChesapeake.net](http://www.CityofChesapeake.net) or call the Division of Stormwater Management at 382-3330.**



## A citizen's guide for the Stormwater Management Program



**Chesapeake**  
VIRGINIA

Department of Public Works  
Stormwater Management Division  
[www.CityOfChesapeake.net](http://www.CityOfChesapeake.net)

Stormwater runoff flows into storm drains located in the streets and then directly into our creeks, lakes and rivers.

## What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is rainfall or snowmelt that runs off surfaces such as roads, compacted ground surfaces and rooftops. As the stormwater runoff moves, it can pick up and carry away natural and man-made pollutants such as fertilizer and animal waste. Eventually, the runoff deposits the pollutants into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters and even our underground sources of drinking water. This is called nonpoint source pollution.

## Sewer System vs Storm Water Drain

Sewer systems and storm water drains are two different things. The water that goes down a sink or toilet flows to a wastewater treatment plant where it is treated and filtered. Water that flows down driveways and streets into a gutter is not treated and goes into a storm drain that flows directly to a lake, river or the ocean.

## Pollutants Harm our Water

We rely on clean water to drink, to support wildlife, to fill our lakes and creeks and to wash up onto the shores of our beaches. Pollutants can contaminate clean drinking water sources, kill off local wildlife and close beaches, lakes and creeks.



## Common Stormwater Pollutants

There are a variety of contaminants that can easily pollute our stormwater. Rain picks up oil and grit left on the roads; sprinklers wash pesticides, fertilizers and weed killers from our gardens and lawns; washing the car carries detergents, oils and grease from the driveway and into our waterways.

**Motor Oil** - Four quarts of motor oil can create an 8-acre oil slick and contaminate a million gallons of drinking water.

**Antifreeze** - Antifreeze is a toxic pollutant that can kill not only aquatic life but also pets when they drink from contaminated puddles.

**Pesticides** - The use of harmful chemicals on your lawn can be reduced with proper mowing, fertilizing and watering. Apply pesticides only in areas where needed and only in directed amounts.

**Animal Waste** - Pet and other animal waste is raw sewage that releases bacteria and oxygen-consuming materials into our waterways. Pet owners should always “scoop the poop”!

**Soaps and Detergents** - Detergents are pollutants that contain phosphorus which contributes to algae blooms. Algae blooms deplete waterways of oxygen and cause fish kills.

**Yard Debris** - Yard waste (grass clippings and leaves) is a pollutant that releases bacteria, oxygen-consuming materials, phosphorus and nitrogen into our waterways. It also clogs storm drains, which contributes to flooding. If necessary, bag yard waste in clear plastic bags and place at the curbside on your regular garbage collection day.

## Preventing Stormwater Pollution

Pollution is a problem but YOU can be the solution! There are many ways you can help prevent stormwater pollution.

- Don't dump waste, including organic material such as leaves and grass clippings, in storm drains.
- Inspect and maintain your car to prevent oil and antifreeze leaks.
- Dispose of household chemicals properly. SPSA's Household Waste Facility is located at 901 Hollowell Lane, Chesapeake. Call 420-4700 for details.



- Take motor oil, antifreeze, oil-based paint, paint thinner, varnishes and solvents to a recycling station.
- Use kitty litter to clean up leaks and spills. Never hose spills into the gutter.
- Buy household and garden products that are environmentally safe.
- Do not apply lawn or garden products when rain is forecast.
- Avoid over-fertilizing your lawn by testing your soil first to find out how much of which nutrient it needs.
- “Scoop the poop” by discarding pet waste in the garbage or flushing down the toilet.

Go to [www.askHRGreen.org](http://www.askHRGreen.org) for more ideas!

**Remember: Only rain down the storm drain.**