

HENDERSON WATER UTILITY
STORMWATER FEE
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

(Revised 07-01-2017)



Q 1. What is stormwater and why is it a problem?

A 1. Stormwater is water from rain and snowmelt. Rooftops and paved areas not only prevent the water from being absorbed naturally but help it run off at a much faster rate. This runoff water contains pollutants that if unmanaged can affect the ecosystems and aquatic life in our streams and lakes.

Q 2. What is the purpose of the stormwater fee?

A 2. The stormwater fee was established to provide revenue to maintain and improve existing stormwater infrastructure in Henderson, to preserve, protect, and improve the water quality of stormwater runoff, and to develop a comprehensive stormwater management plan as mandated by the Federal government and the Kentucky Division of Water's Stormwater Phase II Permit.

Q 3. What are the stormwater fees based on?

A 3. The stormwater fees are based on the size of the customer's water meter. Most residential customers have a water meter size that is less than one inch. Many commercial and industrial customers have water meters that are larger than one inch. Meter size is being used as a proxy for the stormwater impacts associated with the size of a customer's facility.

Q 4. Where does the money go that is collected from the stormwater fee?

A 4. Some of the important uses of this stormwater fee include:

- 1) Capital Improvement Projects to expand and rehabilitate existing stormwater conveyance systems.
- 2) Maintenance and repair of the city's stormwater sewer system.
- 3) Development of stormwater design standards and regulations.
- 4) Improving stormwater quality through monitoring and reduction of illicit discharges and pollutants.
- 5) Public information and education concerning stormwater issues.

Q 5. Who has to pay the stormwater fee?

A 5. Everyone within the city that has water service from Henderson Water Utility has to pay the stormwater fee.

Q 6. How much is the charge for the stormwater fee?

A 6. Most Henderson residents will pay a monthly flat fee of \$5.00 per water meter connection. Commercial and industrial customers will pay more if they have a water meter that is greater than one inch in size. For a detailed breakdown, see "Current Rates and Fees" on Henderson Water Utility's website at <http://www.hkywater.org/governance/rates-and-fees> .

Q 7. Why is the city charging me for rain water?

A 7. You are not being charged for rain. The service charge is to manage programs to reduce or eliminate the pollution of stormwater, and to provide revenue to maintain and improve the existing stormwater infrastructure in Henderson.

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Q 8. Hasn't the city always had storm drains? Nothing has changed at my home/business. Why am I being charged now when I wasn't just a few years ago?

A 8. Yes, the city has had storm drains for a long time. However, the federal regulations that require a comprehensive stormwater quality management program are relatively new. These regulations have only been in effect for cities with a population of 10,000 or more people since 2002. The stormwater fee will enable the city to meet its responsibilities to manage and expand the storm drain system, improve water quality, seek out and eliminate illicit runoff, educate citizens, and enforce pollution prevention measures and techniques.

Q 9. Am I still charged even if it doesn't rain for a long time?

A 9. Yes. The pollution potential is actually greater when it has not rained in a long time because pollutants can build up on all impervious surfaces. In any storm event the initial runoff, or first flush, is the most contaminated. Contrary to what some people believe, stormwater charges are not based upon rainfall. Costs are incurred to reduce pollution, and to provide maintenance and improvements to the stormwater infrastructure. Rainwater is simply the carrier that transports the pollutants to open waterways.

Q 10. How was the rate for household stormwater fees developed?

A 10. The total amount of revenue generated by the stormwater fee represents only about half of what Henderson Water Utility spends each year for stormwater related activities. In recent years, HWU has taken more of the responsibility for maintenance and expansion of the stormwater system. The fees increase as meter size goes up, using meter size as a proxy for the size of a facility, which is related to stormwater impact.

Q 11. I only have a driveway and no other stormwater leaves my property. Why am I being charged the fee?

A 11. Everyone benefits from the city's required Stormwater Management Plan, whether or not each of us has a storm sewer connected directly to our property. The runoff generated from stormwater is contributing to problems downstream. The approach being taken through this program recognizes that everyone contributes to the problem (runoff and pollution), and everyone will share in its benefits. (Improved water quality, reduced flooding, unimpaired access to roads, etc.)

Q 12. How will the fee be billed to me, and when will it start?

A 12. The fee will be added to the monthly utility bills as a separate line item. Billing will start in July 2017.