

Stormwater Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is stormwater?

A: Stormwater runoff is the water that flows off roofs, driveways, parking lots, streets and other hard surfaces during rainstorms. Stormwater runoff is also the water that flows off grass surfaces and wooded areas that is not absorbed into the soil. Runoff that is not absorbed into the ground flows into ditches, culverts, catch basins and storm sewers and typically does not receive any treatment to remove pollutants before entering our local creeks and streams.

Q: What is stormwater pollution?

A: Water from rain or melting snow either seeps into the ground or flows across the ground, ultimately making its way into streams, creeks, and other water bodies. On its way, this runoff can pick up many natural and man-made substances that can pollute local water bodies. Examples of common pollutants include fertilizer, pesticide, pet waste, sediment, oil, salt, trace metals, grass clippings, leaves, and litter. Polluted runoff can be generated anywhere people use or alter the land, such as farms, yards, roofs, driveways, parking lots, construction sites, and roadways.

Q: Why is stormwater runoff a problem?

A. As precipitation falls on agricultural and forested land, it is primarily absorbed into the ground or slowly runs off into streams, rivers or other water bodies. Development resulting in rooftops and paved areas prevents water from being absorbed and creates a faster and higher rate of runoff. This development can cause localized flooding or other water quantity or quality issues. In addition, stormwater can carry harmful pollutants, cause flooding, erode topsoil and stream banks, and destroy natural habitats.

Q: Why do we need to manage our stormwater runoff?

A: Stormwater runoff needs to be managed just as any other process in the City is managed, such as the water, sewer, roadway, or solid waste systems. Management is essential to protect the quality of our natural watercourses as drinking water supplies and for recreational activities such as swimming, fishing, and boating. Stormwater also needs to be managed to ensure that during storm events that stormwater runoff does not flood or erode private property or otherwise put public safety or private property at risk.

Q: What is the City of Painesville's responsibility for stormwater?

A: The City is responsible for managing all aspects of stormwater within its jurisdiction. The City operates and maintains drainage facilities that are located within the public right-of-way. The City does not maintain facilities that are located on private property or that fall under the jurisdiction of other governmental jurisdictions.

Q: What is the City doing to improve its stormwater services?

A: The City is in the process of assessing stormwater throughout the City. This includes holding public meetings, conducting a citizen survey to understand and prioritize improvement projects as well as conduct a thorough analysis and make recommendations on ways to improve stormwater services in the city. In addition, the City is reviewing all current and future regulatory requirements relating to stormwater and advising City staff on stormwater services that should be improved as well as make suggestions for appropriate levels of funding for these stormwater services.

Q: How does the City currently pay for its stormwater services?

A: Stormwater services are currently funded from a fee that is dedicated towards stormwater. Residents currently pay \$2.75 per household and non-residential pay a fee based on the amount of impervious surface on their property.

Q: What does my stormwater fee cover?

A: Currently, the stormwater fee covers a minimal level of service for managing stormwater. The City has a contract with Lake County to provide certain services but it does not cover all aspects of stormwater management and does not pay for capital improvements needed in the city.

Q: If I want to report a stormwater problem, whom should I contact?

A: You can call the City of Painesville at 440-352-9301. If the problem is a City responsibility, we will investigate your concern and advise you of what action can be taken.