

STORMWATER UTILITY FEE BEING DEVELOPED



you're
INVITED

Property owners are invited to join us on September 7 and September 21 at 6PM at the Municipal Building
More information on back.

WHAT IS GOING ON?

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) and federal government requires Palmer Township to manage stormwater through its Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program and implement a pollutant reduction plan. If the township fails to address stormwater concerns, including improving local water quality, PADEP and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) may impose fines. In addition to state and federal requirements, Palmer Township must also manage the costs of maintaining its stormwater infrastructure, address flooding concerns, and educate the public.

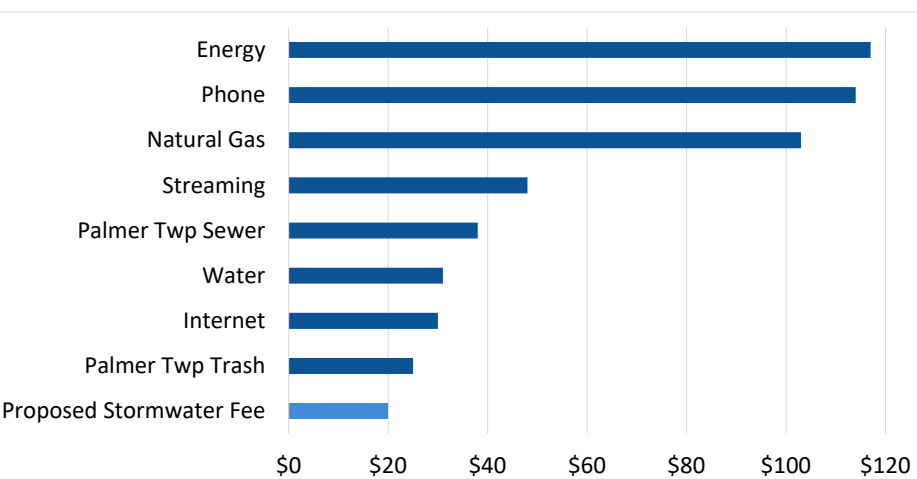
Currently, residential property owners in Palmer Township pay to maintain the stormwater system through property taxes. The issue with using taxes is that a property's assessed value does not correlate with the amount of stormwater it contributes to the system. Additionally, tax-exempt properties,

such as churches and schools, benefit from the stormwater program but do not contribute financially. Without an alternative funding source, taxes would have to be raised to cover rising stormwater costs, inequitably affecting property owners.

As a result, Palmer Township established a steering committee to evaluate and consider alternative methods of funding its stormwater program. The committee determined that the costs of the stormwater program are most equitably met through a stormwater fee which is assessed based on the amount of impervious area on each property. Therefore, properties with larger impervious areas, such as warehouses and industrial sites, will because they contribute more to the system. Palmer Township is providing information to the public to aid in awareness and understanding of the upcoming changes to the stormwater program.

WHAT TO EXPECT?

Palmer Township formed a committee to explore the development of a utility fee to fund the stormwater program. The Township and committee elected to use aerial imagery to develop the amount of impervious surface on each property within the township. Using the impervious area amounts, the steering committee was able to determine how to distribute costs equitably, and what the fee should be for each property. The draft budget results in an anticipated fee of approximately \$20 for the average single family residential property owner.



Anticipated stormwater fees for average single family residential customers

APPROXIMATELY

\$20
PER MONTH

Note: Data for average utility costs from Ana Durrani and Samantha Allen in Forbes, "Monthly Costs in the U.S. by State," (March, 2023).

WHY IS IT NEEDED?

There are stormwater needs throughout the township such as aging and deteriorating infrastructure and flooding concerns that must be addressed in the upcoming years regardless of the work required by the MS4 permit. Neglecting these maintenance needs have had severe consequences. For instance, when pipes fail, the road above the pipe can deteriorate, leading to sinkholes and necessitating further repairs. Recent storms have caused similar damage across the township including sinkholes, pipe failures, road repair, and much more. Similar to a leaky roof, the longer maintenance needs are ignored, the costlier they become in the long run.



**105
MILES
OF PIPE**

farther than the distance from
Palmer Township to Philadelphia.



**2,500+
STRUCTURES**

WHAT'S NEXT?

The proposed fee is expected to begin in 2024. The stormwater fee will be included in the existing sewer and trash bill and will be billed quarterly.

Palmer Township is providing information to the public to aid in public awareness and understanding of the township's stormwater concerns. These meetings will also aim to include the public in the process of developing the stormwater fee to be transparent in the process and approach.

The public are welcome to the Municipal Building (3 Weller Place Palmer, PA 18045) on September 7, 2023 and September 21, 2023 @6PM. Additional information can be found on our website and social media <https://palmertwp.com/index.html>

Additionally, stormwater management extends beyond permit requirements and infrastructure maintenance—it is a matter of public health and safety. Proper management of stormwater helps prevent flooding, reduces the risk of property damage, and mitigates potential threats to public safety. Palmer Township has experienced first-hand the need for improved stormwater infrastructure maintenance and management due to recent catastrophic storm damage. Storm damage incurred between July 15 and 16 could exceed five million dollars, in addition to a backlog of projects that still need to be completed.

Projects to fulfill these improvements and meet State and Federal requirements will demand significant funding. Implementing a stormwater fee is crucial to generate the necessary funds for addressing infrastructure improvements, fulfilling permit requirements, conducting maintenance and repairs, and ultimately protecting public health and safety. The fee structure based on impervious area ensures that those who contribute more stormwater runoff to the system bear a proportionate share of the costs, promoting fairness and equity in funding the stormwater management program.

The implementation of the stormwater fee will enable Palmer Township to undertake a wider range of stormwater projects that will focus on addressing infrastructure and maintenance needs, flood mitigation, water quality, and pollutant reduction requirements.

**\$25-\$30
MILLION**
NEEDED FOR STORMWATER
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS
& POLLUTION REDUCTION
PROJECTS

**OVER 80%
SAVINGS**

Covering stormwater costs from a
tax would typically cost the average
residential owner about 83% more than
from a stormwater fee