



Stormwater Frequently Asked Questions

What is Stormwater and the MS4 Permit?

Stormwater is rain, snow melt, and surface drainage.

The MS4 General Permit is designed to reduce the amount of sediment and pollution that enters surface and ground water from storm sewer systems to the maximum extent practicable. Stormwater discharges associated with MS4s are subject to regulation under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System/State Disposal System (NPDES/SDS). Through the MS4 General Permit, the system owner or operator is required to develop a stormwater pollution prevention program (SWPPP) that incorporates best management practices (BMPs) applicable to their MS4.

206 Cities and Agencies are required to do this in Minnesota. St. Francis is mandated to apply because the City has a population over 5,000 and discharges to an outstanding resource value water (Rum River).

What if the City didn't apply for the MS4 Permit?

The MPCA can issue Administrative Penalty Orders up to \$20,000 and Stipulation Agreements for over \$20,000.

How does the City achieve reducing pollution and sediment as desired by the MS4?

The City adopts regulations for illicit discharges; controls stormwater runoff from construction sites; develops enforcement procedures; inventories and maintains city owned storm sewers, ponds, wetlands, and stormwater infrastructure; and prevents pollution by creating programs, facilities inventory, procedures, training and documentation.

What does the City do with the Stormwater Fee?

The City puts the stormwater fees into a dedicated Stormwater Fund for stormwater related projects. The City must inventory and maintain city owned stormwater infrastructure. The permit requires inventory and maintenance. The City estimates the following stormwater infrastructure:

- Storm Manholes: 91

- Catch Basins: 616
- Storm Ponds: 983
- Storm Sewer conduit: 15.7 miles
- Storm Culverts: 528
- Various ditches, creeks, and natural stormwater features

Also, the City pays 60% of stormwater improvements for road projects. These are subject to review on a case by case basis.

Why is the City sending out these individual stormwater bills? Why not on property taxes or utility bills?

- If the City added this to the levy, it would equate a 6% increase in taxes if the same amount of revenue were to be generated
- The whole city is not on the Utility Billing and in order to do that, utility customers would pay \$5 monthly and subject to applicable late fees in conjunction with their utility bill. They also would have the charge spread out over 12 months, this would not be afforded to non-utility customers.
- Property taxes would exempt non tax paying entities.