

## BILLING QUESTIONS

### Do other cities have stormwater user-fees?

A number of municipalities in the United States have established stormwater utilities to fund their stormwater management programs and facilities. Some of the communities in Iowa include: Ames, Bettendorf, Boone, Burlington, Carroll, Coralville, Des Moines, Dubuque, Iowa City, Norwalk, Sioux City, Waukee, Windsor Heights and West Des Moines.

### What is an ERU?

An ERU (equivalent residential unit) is a measure of impervious surface on a property. The City of Clive has established one ERU to be 3,667 square feet of impervious surface area.

### How is impervious surface calculated?

The number of ERUs on each property is calculated by the Community Development Department based on the most recent aerial photography available to the City of Clive and/or impervious surface data from an approved Site Plan for the property.

### How are the stormwater management fees calculated?

Property owners are charged stormwater management fees based on the total impervious surface area on the property. The stormwater management fee system is based on the total impervious surface area divided by one ERU. All single family dwelling properties are charged the fee of one ERU.

Commercial and Industrial properties with greater than one ERU of impervious surface are charged for the total ERUs for example: a commercial property with 10,000 square feet of total impervious surface would be billed the equivalent stormwater management fees for 2.73 ERUs.

Example: 10,000 square feet divided by 3,667 square feet(1 ERU) equals 2.73 ERUs.

Example: 2.73 ERUs times \$5.00/ERU equals a stormwater management fee of \$13.65 per month.

The rate is reviewed by the City Council each year to determine if an adjustment is needed.

The stormwater management fees will be billed by the Clive Water Department and be made payable monthly at the same time payment for City water is made.

### How are stormwater management fees charged to multi-family dwellings?

Duplex dwellings with two (2) family dwelling units will be treated as two (2) single family dwellings. Townhome dwellings that are de-tached or attached horizontally, and not vertically to one or more other dwelling units shall be treated as one (1) single family dwelling. Any building with three (3) or more family dwelling units shall be treated as commercial/ industrial.

[www.cityofclive.com](http://www.cityofclive.com)

### If I think my bill is incorrect, what should I do?

If you think the impervious surface area was incorrectly calculated and caused your storm-water management fees to be incorrect, you can appeal.

An appeal must be filed in writing with the City of Clive City Manager. In the case of service charge appeals, the appeal shall include a survey prepared by a registered Iowa land surveyor or professional engineer containing information on the total property area, the impervious surface area and any other features or conditions which influence the hydrological response of the property to rainfall events. It may be advantageous to schedule time with a City staff member before appealing to view the data used to determine the fee being charged.

CITY OF CLIVE

[www.cityofclive.com](http://www.cityofclive.com)

## STORMWATER UTILITY CLIVE, IOWA



Answers to  
Frequently  
Asked Questions

CITY OF CLIVE

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

### What is stormwater runoff and why do we need to manage it?

Stormwater runoff is rainfall or snowmelt that flows from saturated permeable surfaces and runs off from impervious surfaces like roofs and paved driveways, sidewalks, parking lots and streets. Stormwater runoff creates drainage and flooding problems, making sump pumps work hard. Stormwater runoff often picks up pollutants such as oils, grease, fertilizers, pesticides, litter and metal.

Stormwater runoff is collected and conveyed through ditches, culverts, intakes, catch basins and storm sewers directly into creeks, streams, lakes and rivers without being treated to remove pollutants.

New federal laws regulating stormwater runoff require the City of Clive to re-evaluate the way we manage stormwater and develop and implement a comprehensive stormwater quality management program to protect property and improve water quality.

### What is an impervious surface and what does it have to do with stormwater?

An impervious surface is any surface area that does not readily absorb water. Because water cannot be absorbed by impervious surfaces, the water running off these surfaces must be managed through well planned, constructed and maintained storm-water facilities to prevent flooding and pollution to the receiving waters. The stormwater management fee is based on the amount of total impervious surface on your property.

Your property's impervious surface area is a good gauge of how much your property is contributing to the overall need for stormwater management facilities in the city of Clive.

### Is gravel considered an impervious surface?

Yes. It is difficult for water to soak into a packed gravel surface. Once gravel is compacted, surface water runs off of it much like a paved surface. The gravel may slow the flow of water from an area, but nearly the same amount of runoff will flow from under the gravel as if the gravel was not there. Many flat roofs are covered with gravel, but they still shed the rainwater that falls on them. In addition, if cars or heavy equipment are traveling on gravel surfaces, the runoff typically carries pollutants like metals or petroleum into our waterways.

### Why do we have stormwater management fees?

Stormwater management fees were implemented August 1, 2005 and are billed monthly to all customers. The stormwater management fees raise revenues to fund the City of Clive's stormwater management program and facilities. This program brings the City into compliance with federal regulations and safeguards our community directly through improved inspection and maintenance of critical stormwater infrastructure and indirectly through public education and outreach programs. Stormwater utility charges to properties in the City of Clive are based on that property's contribution to the need for stormwater management and facilities.

The utility used the amount of impervious surface on a property as the primary basis in calculating stormwater management fees. This user fee system is a fair and equitable way to

raise revenue for the program since it charges those who directly contribute to its need. This method presents our community with an alternative to an unfair across the board property tax hike.

### How are stormwater management fees used?

The stormwater management fees pay for operations and maintenance costs of the stormwater management and facilities.

Some of the services tied to the stormwater management program include:

- Storm sewer system maintenance,
- repairs and construction
- Illicit discharge detection/elimination
- Public education and outreach
- Improving water quality
- Construction site inspections
- Post-construction site inspections

### Who pays the fees?

Owners of all developed land in the City of Clive pay the stormwater management fees.

This includes residential properties, commercial properties, industrial properties, churches, schools and other non-profit organizations. Undeveloped land is not charged stormwater management fees because it does not have impervious surfaces.

### How are the stormwater management fees different from a tax? What is a user fee?

The stormwater management fee is a user-fee, much like the fee that you pay for your water utility or sanitary sewer utility services. Users of these services are charged for the demand they place on the system.

The stormwater that flows off of your property places a demand on a vast system of storm-water infrastructure, which is costly to operate and maintain. Stormwater must be channeled through a system of ditches, culverts, intakes, catch basins and pipes to discharge it into local creeks, streams, lakes and rivers.

CITY OF CLIVE

2123 NW 111th Street  
Clive, Iowa 50325  
515-223-6231

[www.cityofclive.com](http://www.cityofclive.com)