

# Town of Kernersville Engineering Department

## Stormwater Management



### ***Frequently Asked Questions***

#### **WHAT IS STORMWATER?**

Stormwater runoff is water from rain or melting snow that “runs off” across the land instead of seeping into the ground. Stormwater runoff is untreated, in most cases, and carries pollutants into the nearest creek, river or lake and ultimately discharges into our water supplies.

#### **WHY IS CLEAN STORMWATER IMPORTANT?**

Polluted stormwater runoff is the number one cause of water pollution in North Carolina. Stormwater affects the quality of our drinking water as its runoff goes into our water supply. Polluted stormwater adversely affects our environment, wildlife and quality of life for upstream and downstream property owners. The Town of Kernersville is located on the highest point in Forsyth County. Therefore, stormwater runoff from the Kernersville area drains to several drinking water supplies.

#### **WHAT IS A STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM?**

In 1990, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established Phase I of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Program. The regulations required municipalities serving populations of 100,000 or greater to implement a stormwater management program as a means to control polluted stormwater discharges. Phase II of the stormwater rule extended the coverage of the Phase I rule to include urbanized areas as defined by the 2000 U.S. Census. The Phase II rule requires smaller municipalities in urbanized areas, such as the Town of Kernersville, to establish stormwater management programs.

#### **WHEN DID THE TOWN OF KERNERSVILLE ADOPT A STORMWATER PROGRAM?**

In 2003, a citizen’s advisory committee developed a stormwater management program to comply with the Federal and State Clean Water Act mandates and to improve the quality of surface waters in the Town of Kernersville. The Town adopted the stormwater management program in March of 2004 and subsequently received a NPDES Stormwater Permit in October of 2005. In May of 2006, a stormwater utility and rate structure was created to fund the program. Noncompliance with the Town’s NPDES Stormwater Permit could result in the Town being subject to a fine of up to \$25,000 per day.

#### **WHAT ARE THE EPA REQUIREMENTS?**

The program requirements must address the following issues:

1. Public education and outreach
2. Public involvement and participation
3. Illicit discharge, detection and elimination
4. Construction site stormwater runoff control
5. Post-construction stormwater management
6. Pollution prevention and good housekeeping



### **HOW IS THE TOWN'S STORMWATER PROGRAM FUNDED?**

Without the financial support of either the state or federal government, the cost of implementing the stormwater program will be covered by a stormwater utility fee that is based on impervious surface areas. Impervious surfaces are typically asphalt and stone parking areas, building rooftops, sidewalks, roadways, etc. The amount of stormwater runoff generated is directly proportional to the amount of impervious surface areas located on a land parcel. Therefore, property owners with greater amounts of impervious surface area, which generate more stormwater runoff, will be charged more. Non-profit and governmental organizations are not exempt from paying a utility fee.

### **HOW ARE IMPERVIOUS SURFACE AREAS CALCULATED FOR NON-SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES?**

In January of each year, the Town will update their parcel database by determining the impervious surface areas of properties located inside the Town limits through the use of satellite or photographic imagery. This information will be forwarded to the Forsyth County Tax Office who will then attach the stormwater fee to the property taxes that are generally billed each August or September.



### **WHAT IS THE RATE AND HOW IS IT CALCULATED?**

The formula for paying for the program is as follows: every single-family detached parcel containing one (1) house will be assessed an annual service charge of \$39.51. Each residential unit in a duplex, townhome, condominium or other multifamily structure will also pay an annual service charge of \$39.51. All other developed parcels shall be annually billed \$39.51 for up to 2,980 square feet of impervious area plus an additional annual service charge of \$13.26 for each additional 1,000 square feet of impervious surface area. Land parcels with impervious surfaces less than 500 square feet in area will not receive a stormwater fee.

### **WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STORMWATER AND SEWER CHARGES?**

The stormwater charge supports programs to reduce or eliminate the pollution of stormwater runoff from residences and businesses. Wastewater charges are for treatment of the wastewater from your home or business. Stormwater and wastewater systems are separate systems.

### **I LIVE IN A SUBDIVISION WITH A STORM DRAIN THAT DRAINS INTO A DITCH.**

#### **WHY DO I HAVE TO PAY?**

The Town's stormwater conveyance system includes much more than storm drains. Ditches, curbs, gutters, culverts and open stream channels all make up the drainage system that conveys stormwater runoff away from structures and sites in a manner that minimizes the potential for flooding and erosion to properties. Every stormwater conveyance or drainage system ultimately discharges into a stream, river or lake.

### **WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP REDUCE STORMWATER POLLUTION IN MY AREA?**

You can help by exercising good environmental stewardship and educating others to do the same. Please visit the Piedmont Triad Water Quality Partnership at <http://www.piedmontwaterquality.org/> or the State's stormwater website at <http://www.ncstormwater.org/> for more helpful information.

