

Frequent questions regarding the City of Scottsburg's stormwater fee.

What is the MS4 or Stormwater Quality program?

The MS4 Program was initiated in the early 1990's and is rooted in the Federal Clean Water Act of 1972. Larger communities across the country (Phase 1) began to be regulated in 1990, and smaller communities have gradually been added to the list of Phase 2 communities since 1994. Scottsburg was officially notified of being a Phase 2 MS4 Community in 2021. MS4 program requirements are unfunded federal delegated down to individual states, and in turn to local communities to comply with.

What is an MS4?

MS4 is an acronym for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System, which is simply the system of streets, gutters, storm drains, pipes, and ditches that collect rainwater and snowmelt and move it away from neighborhoods to nearby streams, rivers, or lakes.

The important thing to know is that stormwater drains are separate from sanitary sewer systems.

That means:

- Storm drains do NOT go to a treatment plant
- Whatever goes into a storm drain usually flows directly into local waterways

So when it rains, water can pick up things like:

- Oil and grease from roads

- Fertilizer and pesticides from lawns
- Pet waste
- Trash and dirt

All of that can be carried straight into creeks and rivers unless steps are taken to prevent it.

Cities operate MS4s to:

- Reduce flooding
- Protect water quality
- Meet state and federal clean water requirements

That's why communities focus on things like street sweeping, drainage maintenance, education, and pollution prevention—to keep pollutants out of the storm drains before it rains.

In 2025, the City established a Stormwater Program to better manage rainwater runoff, reduce flooding, protect local waterways, and comply with state and federal environmental requirements.

Beginning in 2026, a stormwater fee will be added to property tax bills to support this unfunded mandate/program.

What is the Stormwater Fee?

- The fee will be \$7.00 per month per ERU (Equivalent Residential Unit)
- All single-family residential/agricultural properties are billed one ERU monthly

- Non-residential (i.e. commercial/industrial) properties stormwater fee is determined by the following formula, where 1 ERU=3,100 square feet:[total impervious surface area/1 ERU] X \$7.00 = SW fee per month

This fee is ONLY to be used on City stormwater infrastructure. This does not include personal property.

The primary difference between personal property responsibility and city infrastructure lies in **ownership, location, and maintenance obligations.**

- **Personal Property/Responsibility:** Items you own and maintain entirely, such as your house, private driveway, and pipes from the house to the property line.
- **City Infrastructure:** Publicly owned assets that serve the general public, including roads, streetlights, main water pipes, and public sewers.

The fee helps fund:

- Flood reduction and drainage improvements
- Maintenance of storm drains, ditches, and culverts
- Water quality protection for local streams and rivers

Why Is This Fee Being Implemented?

This was approved by the Board of Works and City Council to maintain compliance with Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) regulations.

This funding ensures a dedicated, sustainable source of revenue to maintain and improve stormwater infrastructure without relying solely on general funds.

When Will This Start?

The stormwater fee will begin appearing on tax bills in 2026. These funds are dedicated to addressing the drainage and infrastructure issues throughout our city. While we can't fix everything instantly, we are already hard at work on current repairs and building a strategic priority list for the near future.

See a problem? Let us know. Your eyes on the ground help us prioritize. Please email our MS4 Coordinator at **mwoods@scottsburg.in.gov** to report specific areas of concern.

Together we can keep Scottsburg flowing!