



Understanding Your Stormwater Utility Fee

In January, the Village launched an online tool to assist property owners in understanding the stormwater utility and their own anticipated fees. By visiting the [Stormwater Master Plan](#) website and clicking on [Utility Fee Estimator Tool](#), residents can access the calculations for impervious area, equivalent runoff units (ERUs), and the estimated fee for the next three years. Charges for the utility begin in July, 2014—meaning users will only pay half of the estimated fee in 2014. A table of the Village’s anticipated fees, by fiscal year is shown below. Property owners should anticipate a letter from the Village this spring further explaining the utility fee and the implementation process.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Stormwater fee per ERU	\$262	\$356	\$358	\$360	\$362

The implementation of a stormwater utility follows the study conducted by Municipal & Financial Services Group (MFSG) in 2013. As a result of their recommendations, the Village Council determined a utility was the most fair and equitable approach to paying for the significant stormwater capital improvements, because each property owner pays based on their contribution to stormwater runoff.

MFSG recently provided the Village with the 2013 Stormwater Utility Survey conducted by Western Kentucky University. The survey is drawn from an extensive database of utilities located all over the country and found fees ranging from zero to \$250 per month. It also found ERUs to be the most widely used method of funding.

Due to the significant modernization planned for Winnetka’s infrastructure, large capital investments will be made over the next three to five years—resulting in a stormwater utility fee matched to cover those capital costs. In 2014, Winnetka’s annual stormwater utility fee cost will be \$262 per ERU. By 2018, the annual cost of the fee will be \$362. While this does make Winnetka’s utility fee higher than neighboring communities such as Aurora, Downers Grove, Highland Park, and Northbrook, the WKU survey demonstrates that stormwater utilities in other parts of the country have similar fees.

Locality	Monthly Fee	Annual
Long Creek Watershed, ME	\$250.00	\$3,000.00
Osseo, MN	\$31.50	\$378.00
Mission Hills, KS	\$29.17	\$349.80
Portland, OR	\$22.37	\$268.44
Saint Anthony, MN	\$18.95	\$227.40
Tocoma, WA	\$17.82	\$213.84
Duvall, WA	\$17.46	\$209.52
Seattle, WA	\$16.85	\$202.20
Redmond, WA	\$16.56	\$198.72

Further resources, such as a detailed [Stormwater Utility Fee Fact Sheet](#) and [Funding FAQs](#) are located on the [Stormwater Master Plan](#) website.



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