Clark County Public Works
Clean Water Fee
Frequently Asked Questions

Clark County is responsible for building and maintaining the public drainage system that carries storm water runoff from roads and developed areas to the natural waterways throughout the urban unincorporated area. This system includes pipes, catch basins, storm water ponds, roadside ditches and related infrastructure.

Given the size of our community and watershed, our storm water collection system is regulated by the State of Washington, Department of Ecology under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit (NPDES). The permit implements the federal Clean Water Act to reduce pollution from storm water runoff and requires the county to limit pollution leaving its drainage system that enters our creeks, streams and rivers.

The County's Clean Water Division administers the activities that comply with the permit. Funding for Clean Water comes from the fee paid by property owners in unincorporated Clark County. The fee ordinance was enacted in November 1999 and has collected fees from property owners since 2000.

How am I billed for the Clean Water Fee?
The fee is billed on your property tax statements mailed in February and due April 30th each year. If your combined bill is over $50 and half of the tax bill was paid on or before April 30th, the second-half will be billed in September and payable by October 31st.

Where does the money go and how is it used?
The money stays in the Clean Water Fund and cannot be used for other purposes. The funds are used to clean up stormwater runoff and implement program requirements that comply with the NPDES permit. The permit covers monitoring, planning, capital projects, enforcement, operations and maintenance, as well as education and outreach.

What is "impervious"?
By definition from the County Code 13.30A, an impervious surface prevents water from entering the soil in its natural condition. Water that cannot soak into the ground will run along the ground surface picking up pollutants before entering the storm drains or creeks. Typical impervious surfaces include roofs, sidewalks and roads.

Why are fees going up in 2015?
The fee has not been increased since its establishment in 1999. Since that time, the requirements have increased, there is new development and the costs related to stormwater management have increased. To comply with the permit requirements, additional funds are required.

This fee does NOT apply to your drinking water.
If you have questions about drinking water, contact:
Public Health Department
(360) 397-8000.

For more information about the Clean Water Program:

www.clark.wa.gov/stormwater
(360) 397-2121

PROTECT WATER ★ ONLY RAIN IN DRAIN

CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Is this a tax?
No, this is a fee that can only be used for Clean Water.

What if there is an error on my bill?
Contact the Treasurer's office at (360) 397-2252.

What happens if I don't pay the fee?
Delinquent Clean Water Fee payments are subject to interest and penalties at the same rate as property tax delinquencies.

How do I appeal this fee?
If you think your fee was calculated incorrectly, contact the Clean Water Division at (360) 397-2121. We will mail you a form to be completed within 45 days. Staff will review the request to determine if there is an error, contact you with further questions and approve or deny the request in writing.

How do I find out if my fee has been paid?
Call the Treasurer's office at (360) 397-2252 or go on-line to Clark County's Maps Online, enter your address, click on the Property Information Center and the Taxes tab (line item on Tax Statement). Payment information is on the Taxes tab.

Are reduced fees available?
Qualifying low-income senior citizen can apply for a reduction of fifty percent (50%) of the amount specified in Code 13.30A.050(B)(1) (pursuant to RCW 84.36.381).

Single-family residential dwellings qualifying for hardship status, pursuant to Section 40.260.210(A) may not be subject to a service charge (see Code 13.30A.065).

Why do I pay more in the urban area?
Higher fees pay for the design, construction, inspection, maintenance and enforcement of stormwater facilities in the urban area where management is more intensive.

How much is the fee in Clark County?

The fee is based on the type of property and whether it is located in the Urban Growth Area. In addition to amending the rate structure the Board of County Commissioners adopted a temporary $5 surcharge to fund a settlement for a Clean Water Act violation. This surcharge will expire in 2019.

Land Use Category	Annual rate inside the Urban Growth Area *(not including surcharge)*	Annual rate outside the Urban Growth Area *(not including surcharge)*
1. Single-family residential detached	$47.00 / single-family residence	$35.00 / single-family residence
2. Single-family residential large lots		
- Single-family residence on 0.5 - 1 acres	$43.70	$31.70
- Single-family residence on 1 to 5 acres	$40.40	$28.40
- Single-family residence on 5 -20 acres	$37.10	$25.10
- Single-family residence on 20+ acres	$33.80	$21.80

Larger lots receive a fee reduction because they typically have more pervious surface, areas not covered by pavement, roofs and other hard surfaces, to soak up stormwater.

Land Use Category	Annual rate inside the Urban Growth Area	Annual rate outside the Urban Growth Area
3. Multifamily residential lots	$47.00 X number of residential units	$47.00 X number of residential units
4. Businesses		
Includes retail stores, commercial, offices, churches, hospitals, airports, public or private utility installations, public or private schools, golf courses, government structures, other public facilities, subject to RCW 90.03.525, industrial, manufacturing and railroad right-of-way, county road and street right-of-way	$47.00 X number of base units or portion thereof	$35.00 X number of base units or portion thereof

How does Clark County's fee compare to other communities?

Clark County has one of the lowest fees amongst other large counties and cities in Western Washington, as noted in the chart (example is for single-family residential lot):

high	
Seattle	$258.06
Tacoma	$252.96
King County	$171.58
Snohomish County	$122.00
Clark County	$47 / $35
low	