

# TOWN OF WESTFORD

## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT UTILITY FEE AND CREDIT POLICY

### Introduction

Our town maintains a drainage system valued at over \$150,000,000. The drainage system carries water from roads and properties back to the waterways that provide our drinking water throughout Westford. The Environmental Protection Agency has increased stormwater management requirements across the country with the goal of protecting and improving water resources. A Stormwater Master Plan was completed in 2017 for Westford and provided information to allow us to properly plan for, and comply with EPA regulations, through operational, maintenance, and capital improvements to our stormwater management systems.

### Revenue Requirements

The Stormwater Master Plan provided detailed information about our existing infrastructure and made recommendations for supporting a Stormwater Management Plan. Three levels of service were modeled; minimum, protective and advanced. The Board of Selectmen agreed that the protective level of service is the right choice for Westford. The protective level of service provides funding for compliance with EPA and DEP regulations through a program to repair and replace aging infrastructure. The town currently spends approximately \$600,000 per year on stormwater management related activity. To move to a protective level of service, the cost is expected to be approximately \$1,000,000 more per year for Fiscal Years 21 – 23 based on our budget projections ([www.westfordma.gov/sw\\_projected\\_budget](http://www.westfordma.gov/sw_projected_budget)).

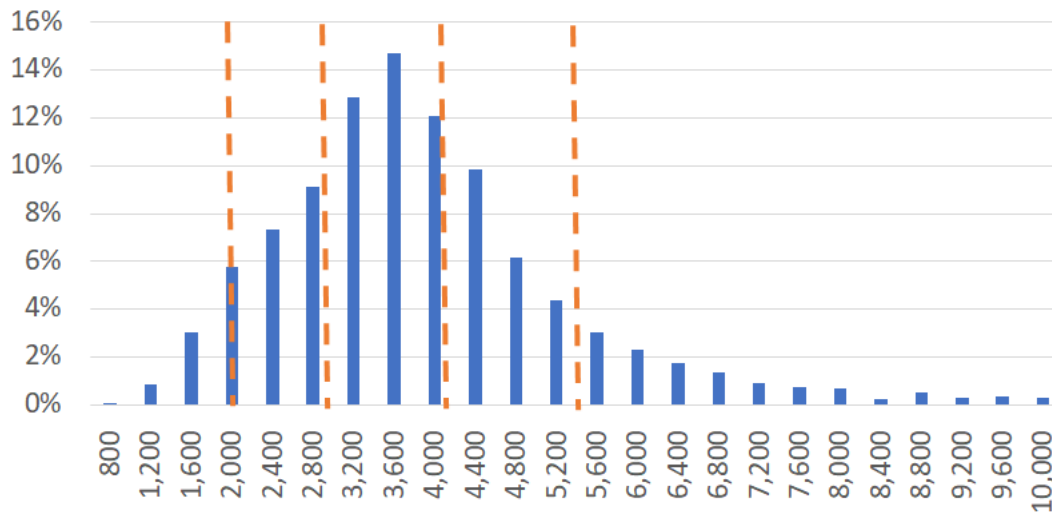
### Funding Solution

The Board of Selectmen established a Stormwater Utility Fee in accordance with MGL CH 83:16 ([www.westfordma.gov/sw-mgl-ch-83-16](http://www.westfordma.gov/sw-mgl-ch-83-16)). The fee will be implemented in FY2021 beginning July 1, 2020. The fee is based upon impervious surface area. Impervious surfaces include roofs, paved areas, decks, walkways and any other surface that prevents rain from passing directly into the ground. Gravel is not included in the impervious area calculation. The fee has been broken down into five tiers for Single Family Residential (SFR) properties. The middle tier represents the most common sized impervious surface area for SFR properties, and is used to establish one unit, called an Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU). An ERU in Westford is equal to 3500 square feet. Non-single-family residential properties will be charged a fee of \$75.00 per ERU, based upon the size of impervious surface area on their property, rounded up to the next whole ERU. Bills will be issued in one mailing containing two bill stubs, allowing the option to pay upon receipt or bi-annually.

SFR Properties Impervious Square Footage	Proportion in Tier	Yearly Fee	ERU
Tier 1: <2,000 Square Feet	10%	\$ 37.50	0.5
Tier 2: >2,000 to <=2,900	19%	\$ 52.50	0.7
Tier 3: >2,900 to <=4,100	40%	\$ 75.00	1.0
Tier 4: >4,100 to <=5,500	20%	\$ 97.50	1.3
Tier 5: >5,500 Square Feet	11%	\$150.00	2.0

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on 9/24/2019  
Amended by the Board of Selectmen on 10/15/2019  
Amended by the Board of Selectmen on 2/11/2020

## SFR Impervious Area Distribution



A parcel lookup tool is available on town’s website at this link <http://arcg.is/HG0mW>. This tool will allow you to view details on your property’s impervious surface area.

### Billing for Multi-Family and Private Roads

Multi-family properties will be billed to owners according to their footprint on the GIS mapping system. Bills will be sent to condominium and homeowner associations for many of our multi-family developments to accommodate the calculation of shared impervious areas. Private roads within a parcel are counted as impervious surfaces and are included in the calculation of fees. Where a private road is the only impervious feature within the parcel, the property will be billed for the road.

### Non-Profits and Tax-Exempt Property Utility Fees

Non-profit and tax-exempt property owners must also pay a stormwater utility fee. The Board of Selectmen voted to delay stormwater fees for non-profits for one year. The starting date for this fee will be July 1, 2021. The fee for all other tax-exempt properties will begin July 1, 2020. It is important to note that governmental entities are not considered non-profits, and therefore will be subject to the fee. Non-profit properties are categorized in two class codes in our database under Religious and Other. The non-profit properties are as follows:

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RELIGIOUS							
Parcel ID	Street No.	Street Name	Owner	Land Use Code	Land Use Description	ERUs	Fee @ \$75/ERU
025 0019 0000		PINE RIDGE RD	ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE	962	RELIGIOUS GROUP	17	\$ 1,275
025 0076 0000		NORTH ST	ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE	962	RELIGIOUS GROUP	13	\$ 975
025 0091 0001		WEST ST	ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE	962	RELIGIOUS GROUP	5	\$ 375
054 0027 0000		PATTEN RD	RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH	962	RELIGIOUS GROUP	2	\$ 150
025 0086 0000	25	MILOT RD	WAT BUDDHABHAVANA OF MA	960	CHURCH	3	\$ 225
025 0091 0000	107	NO MAIN ST	ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE	960	CHURCH	15	\$ 1,125
025 0137 0000	75	COLD SPRING RD	ST MARKS EPISCOPAL CHURCH	960	CHURCH	12	\$ 900
026 0028 0000	32	GRANITEVILLE RD	THE IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH OF LOWELL	960	CHURCH	5	\$ 375
059 0017 0000	48	MAIN ST	FIRST PARISH CHURCH UNITED	960	CHURCH	7	\$ 525
062 0027 0000	6	CHURCH ST	UNITED METHODIST CHURCH	960	CHURCH	10	\$ 750
<b>Totals</b>						<b>89</b>	<b>\$ 6,675</b>

OTHER							
Parcel ID	Street No.	Street Name	Owner	Land Use Code	Land Use Description	ERUs	Fee @ \$75/ERU
055 0012 0000	10	LINCOLN ST	WESTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC	934	IMPROVE-EDUC	2	\$ 150
054 0012 0009	0	MACQUARRIE LN	WESTFORD CONSERVATION TR INC	950	VACANT-CONS	1	\$ 75
018 0061 0000	55	SOUTH CHELMSFORD RD	MIDDLESEX COUNTY 4-H FAIR INC	958	CHAR RECR	31	\$ 2,325
040 0018 0000	114	DUNSTABLE RD	AMERICAN LEGION POST 437	954	FRATERNAL	8	\$ 600
052 0026 0000	67	W PRESCOTT ST	VFW POST 6539	954	FRATERNAL	6	\$ 450
062 0022 0000	2	CROSS ST	AMERICAN LEGION POST 159	954	FRATERNAL	2	\$ 150
007 0001 0001		OLD RD	MASSACHUSETTS AUDUBON SOCIETY	950	VACANT-CONS	2	\$ 150
003 0005 0000	173	CARLISLE RD	CHOICE	970	HOUSING AUT	7	\$ 525
065 0023 0000	34	PLAIN RD	THE EDINBURG CENTER, INC.	959	HOUSE-OTHR	2	\$ 150
025 0193 0000	77	GRANITEVILLE RD	FRIENDS OF PROJECT COPE INC	959	HOUSE-OTHR	2	\$ 150
049 0015 0101	11	MAKEPEACE RD	CIL REALTY OF MASSACHUSETTS	959	HOUSE-OTHR	1	\$ 75
<b>Totals</b>						<b>64</b>	<b>\$ 4,800</b>

## Credit Criteria

A system for credits has been established based on Best Management Practices (BMPs) identified in Westford's Stormwater Management Permit ([www.westfordma.gov/sw\\_credits](http://www.westfordma.gov/sw_credits)). The goal is to substantially reduce the amount of stormwater contributed to the town's stormwater management system. Qualifying non-single family residential (NSFR) customers could receive a reduction of up to 50%. No NSFR fee will be reduced below one ERU. Qualifying SFR customers may receive a tier reduction. No SFR fee will be reduced below \$37.50. Reductions in impervious area that would constitute a change in fee will be reviewed by our Engineering Department on a case by case basis.

## Bill Adjustments

Bill adjustments may be necessary to correct or update stormwater related criteria in the Town's GIS system. Applications for bill adjustments will be reviewed by the Engineering Department.

Appeals of the Engineering Department credit and adjustment application decisions will be heard by a panel made up of a member of the Select Board, Planning Board and a Water Commissioner.

## Fee Review

The Board of Selectmen set the fee for a period of three fiscal years, FYs 2021 through FY2023 based on our projected 3-year budget. The funding requirements for the Stormwater Management Program will be reviewed by the Board of Selectmen prior to the end of FY2023 to determine appropriate fee level and term for FY2024 and beyond.

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