

## The Problem

Did you know that over 80% of the water pollution problems in Dover is from stormwater runoff?

Runoff – rain and melting snow that doesn't soak into the ground – comes from roads and parking lots and also from the hard surfaces at our homes and properties such as:

- Roofs
- Driveways and Walkways
- Decks and Patios
- Compacted lawns

Water that would normally soak into the ground instead runs off these surfaces and carries pollutants to our nearby lakes, ponds, rivers, and estuaries. Pollution sources include:

- Eroding soils
- Sand, Salt, and Sediment
- Fertilizer and Lawn chemicals
- Pet waste
- Trash and Debris

Luckily, you can help by soaking up the rain at your property to prevent runoff. Open this brochure for ideas and visit [www.soaknh.org](http://www.soaknh.org) for more information.

As the City continues to grow, City Council seeks to create a Stormwater and Flood Resiliency Utility as a more sustainable and fairer way to fund the growing list of stormwater and flood resilience needs.

The City will offer credits that provide opportunities for all property owners to reduce their rate. For example, credits will be awarded to property owners that reduce the volume of stormwater or stormwater pollution from their property. Reductions can be achieved through on-site controls such as those outlined in the NHDES Soak up the Rain program.

[www.soaknh.org](http://www.soaknh.org)



For more information please visit:

[www.dover.nh.gov/government/city-operations/community-services](http://www.dover.nh.gov/government/city-operations/community-services)

Soak  
UP the  
Rain.  
New Hampshire

Do-It-Yourself  
Stormwater  
Solutions  
to receive  
Stormwater and  
Flood Resiliency  
Credits off of  
utility fee

# The Solution

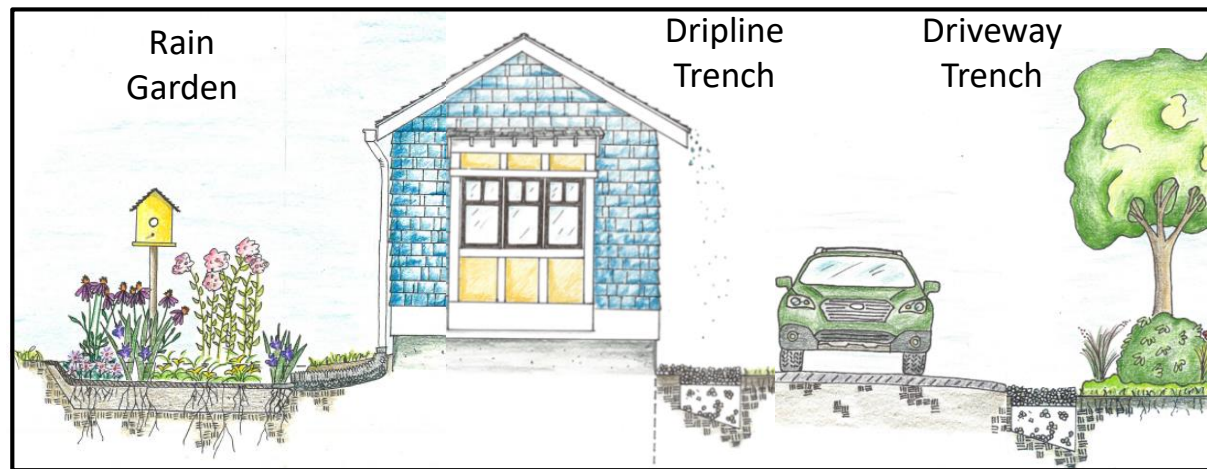
You can capture rain and melting snow from your roof, driveway, pathway, or other surface by building one of these Soak Up the Rain NH “Stormwater Solutions”:

- ❖ Rain Garden
- ❖ Vegetated Buffer
- ❖ Vegetated Swale
- ❖ Infiltration Steps
- ❖ Dripline Infiltration Trench
- ❖ Driveway Infiltration Trench
- ❖ Dry Well
- ❖ Porous Pavers

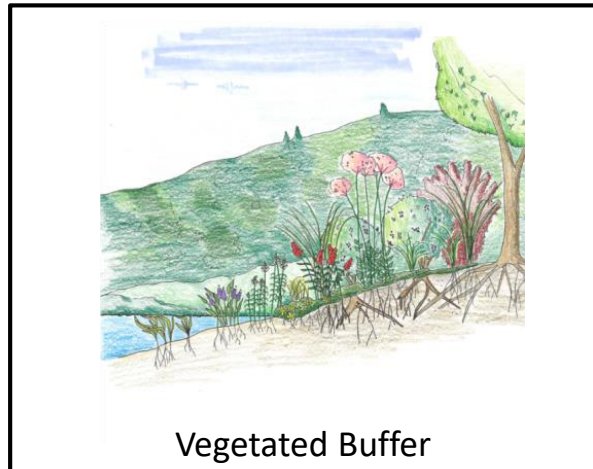
The benefits of allowing water to soak into the ground include:

- ❖ Reducing the amount of runoff
- ❖ Preventing runoff from carrying pollutants to waterbodies
- ❖ Recharging groundwater sources

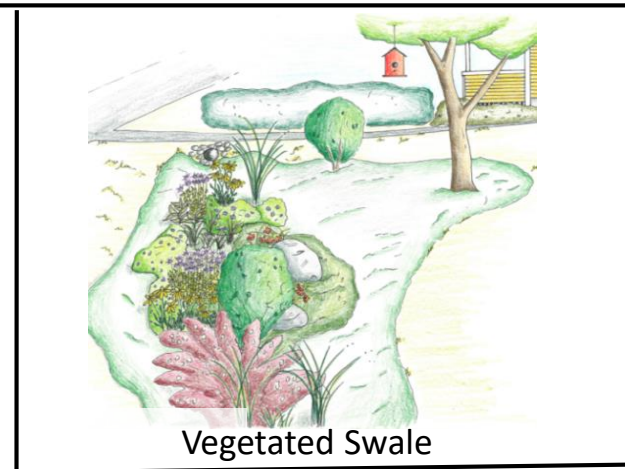
Find Do-It-Yourself installation instructions for 10 “Stormwater Solutions” under “Resources” at [www.soaknh.org](http://www.soaknh.org)



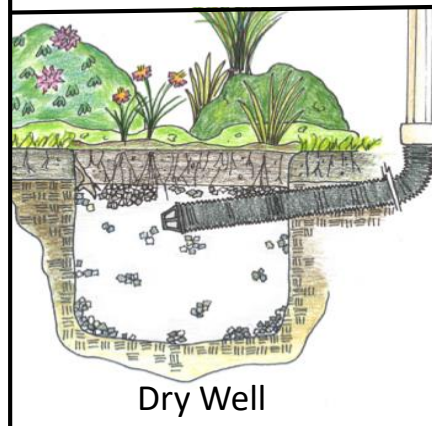
## DO-IT-YOURSELF STORMWATER SOLUTIONS



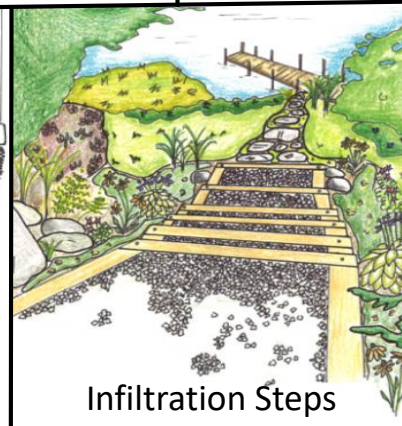
Vegetated Buffer



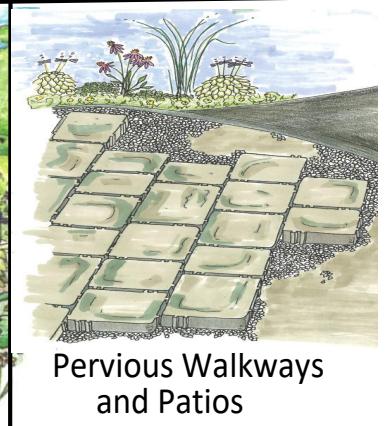
Vegetated Swale



Dry Well



Infiltration Steps



Pervious Walkways and Patios

# How will Dover Benefit from a Stormwater and Flood Resilience Utility Program?



As the City continues to grow, City Council seeks to create a stormwater and flood resilience utility as a more sustainable and fairer way to fund the growing list of stormwater and flood resilience needs. The following provides information in response to frequently asked questions about the potential benefits of a proposed utility program and a basic comparative assessment using several property examples to show how an estimated utility fee would compare to the estimated property tax portion currently used to pay for annual stormwater and flood resilience costs. If enacted as currently envisioned, the utility would begin at the start of the 2025 fiscal year on July 1, 2024.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Informational Workshop | Tuesday, October 17 | 5:30 pm

The City of Dover will host a Public Informational Workshop to discuss the proposed fee structure and various crediting options associated with a stormwater and flood resilience utility. The workshop will be held in **Room 305 of the McConnell Center** and will provide information about the proposed utility fee structure and available credit options followed by a breakout session to solicit public feedback on how best to implement it.

For additional updates, news, public meetings, or other City communications, visit:  
<http://www.dover.nh.gov/government/city-operations/community-services/stormwater-management/>

## Comparison of Estimated Annual Utility Fee vs. Property Tax

Based on an annual stormwater and flood resilience cost of \$4.5 million, the following provides a comparison of the potential annual stormwater utility fee versus the estimated amount of annual property tax that would be assessed on various property types. The estimated utility fee is based on the number of Equivalent Residential Units (ERUs), which is calculated by dividing the total impervious area by 3,200 square feet rounded to the nearest ERU. These examples are intended to provide a general basis for assessing how the proposed utility might affect your situation based on your property type and estimated amount of impervious area.



Property Examples	Single-Family Home	Commercial	Agricultural	Residential HOA		
Impervious Area (sq. ft)	1,500	4,000	10,700	580,000	7,000	129,800
ERUs	0.5	1.0	3.0	179.0	2.0	39
Est. Annual SW Fee <sup>1</sup>	\$80	\$160	\$480	\$28,611	\$320 <sup>3</sup>	\$168 <sup>4</sup>
Est. Property Tax Amount <sup>2</sup>	\$180	\$275	\$360	\$11,380	\$265	\$200

**Notes:**

- The estimated stormwater fee is based on the amount of impervious area on the property and the proposed fee structure subject to City Council approval.
- The property tax amount is based on the estimated assessment value provided in Dover City Assessor online MapGeo property database and the portion of the FY24 City tax rate that would be used to fund \$4.5 million in annual stormwater and flood resilience costs. These estimated fees do not include available credit options that could reduce fees by as much as 50% subject to City Council approval.
- This property would be eligible for a 25% low density credit as well as other credit options available to all properties that could reduce the estimated annual stormwater utility fee by as much as 50% or more depending on eligibility criteria and contingent on City Council approval.
- Estimated fee and property tax amount reflects a per unit cost for each residence in the HOA.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Why is it important to manage stormwater and build Flood Resilience?** Stormwater that flows over impervious surfaces, such as rooftops, driveways, and parking lots, picks up various pollutants such as oil, nutrients, bacteria, and sediment before it enters the City storm drains and is discharged into local water bodies including Willand Pond and the Bellamy, Cocheco, and Salmon Falls Rivers. Proper stormwater management can improve water quality, reduce flooding, and protect drinking water by allowing stormwater to replenish groundwater supplies.

**What stormwater infrastructure does the City own and maintain?** The City owns and maintains over 3,000 catch basins, 65 miles of drainage pipe, 100 miles of open drainage, 140 culverts and 450 stormwater outfalls. Some of this infrastructure is over 100 years old. The City is responsible for maintaining and protecting the water quality in adjacent water resources including wetland areas to minimize downstream flooding while complying with various state and federal regulations.

**Why is the City looking at stormwater and flood resilience utility now?** Annual stormwater costs have risen by more than 45% in just the last five years, mainly due to increasing regulatory requirements. Also, more frequent, extreme rainfall events and ongoing development threaten to cause more local and regional flooding events. Over 100 acres of new impervious area were added in Dover just in the last 6 years. The City has identified more than \$5 million in critical culvert and bridge replacement projects that would help reduce future flooding but the capital funding for these projects continues to be deferred due to competing funding needs.

**What are the City's annual stormwater and flood resilience costs?** For FY24, the City is expected to spend \$4.5 million for stormwater and flood resilience operating and capital costs, which includes debt service payments for completed and anticipated future authorized projects. The revenue generated by a stormwater and flood resilience utility fee would be used to pay for these same annual stormwater related costs which are currently paid for by property taxes.

**How is a utility fee different from a tax?** A stormwater and flood resilience utility fee is a service fee similar to a water and sewer utility fee, that accounts for each property's usage or demand on the City's stormwater system and related flood resilience infrastructure. The utility fee would be based on the amount of impervious area on a property which is the primary generator of stormwater on each property.

**Why is a stormwater utility fee considered to be a fairer funding system?** Currently, 55% of the property taxes used to pay for stormwater related costs comes from single- family residential properties even though these properties only account for 25% of the impervious area in the City. Under a utility fee system, larger properties with more impervious area would pay more while smaller properties with limited amounts of impervious area would pay less. Tax exempt properties would also be subject to a utility fee.

**How much would the annual SW utility fee be for the average property owner?**

Nearly 80% of the single- family homeowners are estimated to pay no more than \$160 per year and potentially much less using various proposed credit options. About 53% of the commercial property owners and 63% of the tax-exempt properties are estimated to pay no more than \$500 per year to fund the annual stormwater costs. These property owners would also be able to reduce their annual fee through various crediting options.

**How would the proposed stormwater fee compare to the annual property tax amount that an average homeowner pays to fund the \$4.5 Million in annual stormwater costs?**

The average single-family homeowner pays approximately \$275 per year in property taxes to cover the annual stormwater costs based on an average assessed value of \$420,000. See other property example comparisons of the potential stormwater fee vs. property taxes for various property types on previous page.

For more information on how a stormwater utility would work and its benefits, visit the City's Stormwater Management page, which includes links to the story map of why the utility is being proposed. It also provides a means for public comments and suggestions via an online form.

### Questions?

Contact the City of Dover, New Hampshire's Department of Community Services at 603-516-6450 or email [g.young@dover.nh.gov](mailto:g.young@dover.nh.gov).

For additional updates, news, public meetings, or other City communications, visit: [www.dover.nh.gov/government/city-operations/community-services](http://www.dover.nh.gov/government/city-operations/community-services)

