

Dover Stormwater and Flood Resilience Utility

Fact Sheet



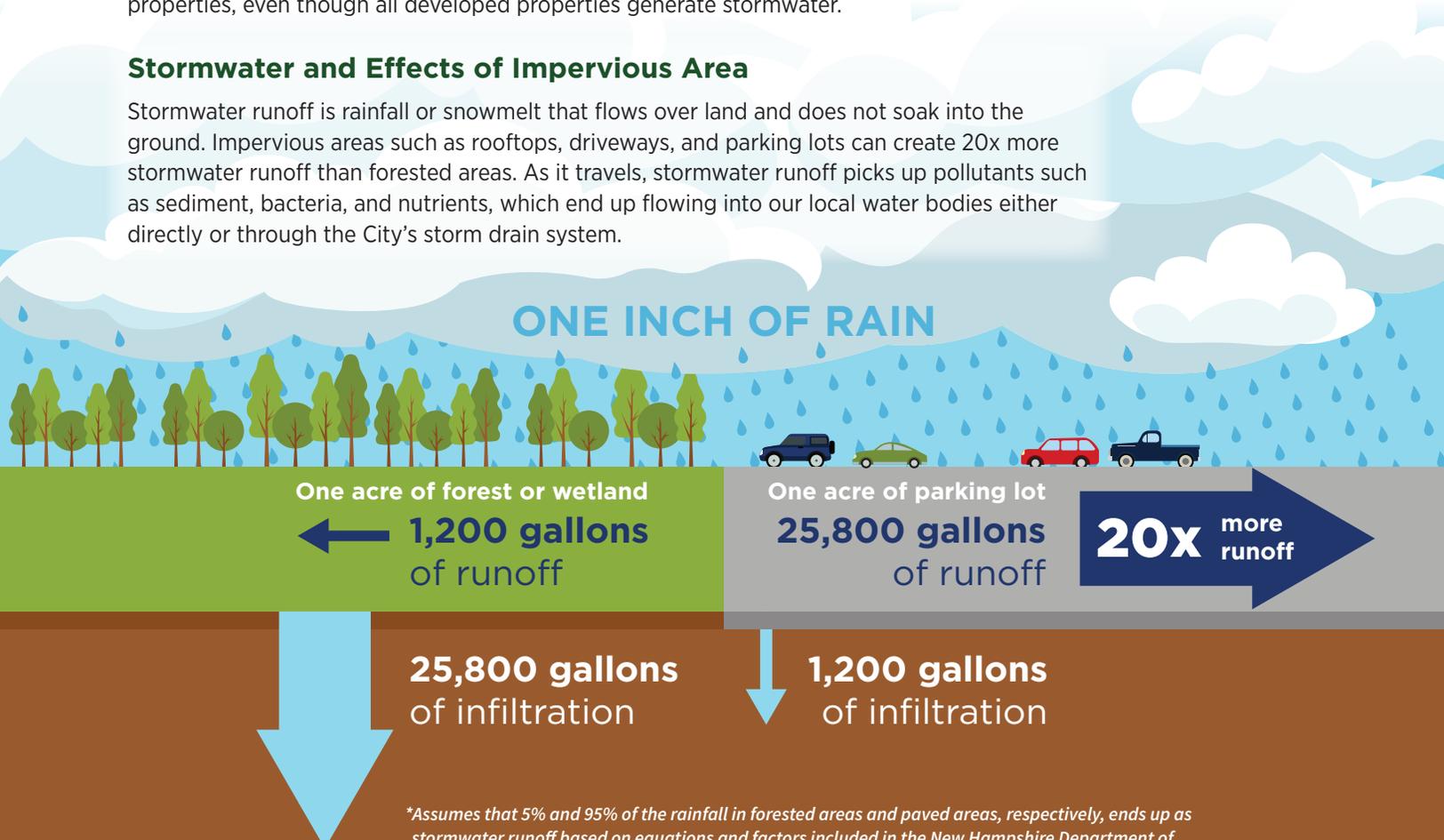
Growing Demands

As the City has grown and developed over time, the demands to keep up its stormwater infrastructure have also grown much like those of the water and sewer systems. The City now has over 100 miles of storm drainpipes and swales, and over 3,000 catch basins, as well as hundreds of culverts and outfalls. Much of this infrastructure is more than 100 years old and is overwhelmed during extreme rain events, resulting in increased flooding and property damage. At the same time, the City is facing more stringent regulatory requirements to manage stormwater and restore water quality in our adjacent water resources. These growing demands are causing the City's annual stormwater operating and capital improvement budgets to rise at an accelerated pace. Critical drainage and flood mitigation projects totaling more than \$5 million have been deferred due to competing funding priorities. Using property taxes to fund the stormwater budget is not sustainable or equitable, as the property tax portion used to fund the stormwater budget is not tied to a property's usage of the system. Not all properties contribute to the City general fund, such as tax-exempt properties, even though all developed properties generate stormwater.

As Dover celebrates its 400th anniversary, the City seeks to secure a more flood resilient and sustainable future with a stormwater and flood resilience utility.

Stormwater and Effects of Impervious Area

Stormwater runoff is rainfall or snowmelt that flows over land and does not soak into the ground. Impervious areas such as rooftops, driveways, and parking lots can create 20x more stormwater runoff than forested areas. As it travels, stormwater runoff picks up pollutants such as sediment, bacteria, and nutrients, which end up flowing into our local water bodies either directly or through the City's storm drain system.



How Would a Stormwater and Flood Resilience Utility Work?

A stormwater and flood resilience utility would operate much like an electric, sewer, or water utility, where a fee would be based on a property's relative usage or amount of impervious area. Properties with larger amounts of impervious area would pay a larger share of the overall budget. The fee would go into an enterprise fund used solely to pay for the operations and maintenance of the City's storm drain system, stormwater treatment, and flood resilience infrastructure upgrades. The utility would also apply to tax-exempt properties that currently do not pay for stormwater costs through the general fund such as municipal, county, and state-owned facilities as well as various non-profit organizations.



Currently, over **2,000 communities** in the United States have adopted a stormwater utility, including **more than 30 communities in New England.**

How Would Dover Benefit From a Utility Rather Than Continuing To Rely On the Property Tax?

Fairness: Currently, residential property owners pay more than 50% of the City's stormwater budget, but these properties only account for 25% of the City's impervious area. Under a utility, each property's share of the overall budget would be based on its amount of impervious area.

Transparency: A stormwater and flood resilience utility would generate funds dedicated for use only on stormwater and flood mitigation efforts. As an enterprise fund, revenue and expenditures would require detailed accounting and reporting subject to City Council review and authorization as well as annual independent audits.

Enhanced Resiliency: More consistent funding would allow the City to better plan and implement capital improvements and, thus would reduce future flood risks and improve water quality more efficiently.

Incentives: A usage-based fee would encourage property owners to implement effective strategies onsite, such as rain gardens, which would reduce pollution, flood risk, and costs to property owners.

Proposed Implementation Timeline



MAY 2023

1st Public Workshop



OCT 2023

2nd Public Workshop



JAN 2024

City Council Presentation

Questions?

Contact the City of Dover, New Hampshire's Department of Community Services at 603-516-6450 or email 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

