

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Stormwater Utility Credits and Grants

Stormwater management is a community-wide responsibility. The credits and grants reward property owners for managing stormwater and maintaining stormwater infrastructure on properties not owned by the City. To learn more about credits and grants, please read the draft of the Credit Manual available at <http://www.peoriagov.org/wetweather/library/> under "Stormwater Utility."

1. Can my existing best management practice (rain garden, detention pond, permeable pavement, etc.) be used?

Your existing best management practice may qualify for a credit if it was built to the required credit design standards, has been properly maintained and functions as it was designed to function. Your existing best management practice must have its original capacity to qualify.

2. Can brick or gravel be considered permeable?

Both brick and gravel are considered impervious surfaces as they are typically not designed for stormwater infiltration. However, in the rare instance that these materials are used in a way designed for stormwater infiltration, the project may qualify for a green infrastructure or rate reduction credit.

3. Do cisterns qualify for credits?

Most cisterns will not qualify for credits. Cisterns are underground tanks that can hold stormwater. Many cisterns are old and filled with rock (which is challenging to see as they are underground). Cisterns must have a pump in order to drain the water to have the capacity to hold more water. Most cisterns do not have a pump and a mere hand/manual pump wouldn't be sufficient for the amount of water the cistern holds. It might take a person hours to pump out all of that water, which isn't realistic. If an automatic pump was installed, the project may qualify for an innovation credit.

4. If I drain my downspouts to grass, do I need to pay the utility fee?

You would still need to pay the utility fee because most surfaces, including grass, generate stormwater runoff. Native prairies and woodlands still generate runoff. Grass just generates less runoff than impervious surfaces. The City is using impervious area to determine each property's use of the system. This methodology is used by many other cities for their stormwater utilities.

If the City were to do an actual drainage analysis of every property (that would be over 46,800 properties!), the administrative cost would be high and the general outcome of that effort would result in a cost distribution similar to using impervious area information.

5. Are there options for residents with low or fixed income?

The City is exploring solutions to lessen the impact of the stormwater utility on residents who have low income. We have discovered that most stormwater utilities do not offer a low or fixed income program.

6. If I drain to a creek, ravine, pond or lake, am I exempt from paying or would I qualify for a credit/grant?

Property owners who drain to a creek, ravine, pond or lake still must pay the stormwater utility fee. These waterbodies are important parts of the stormwater infrastructure system. Lakes often feature overflow structures that drain water into the stormwater system when the level rises too high.

The stormwater system is made up of City-owned and privately-owned infrastructure and the utility will provide funds to help maintain that infrastructure. The Private Property Drainage Assistance Program and Stormwater Infrastructure Investment Grant are two programs to help private infrastructure maintenance.

7. If I drain to the County/Peoria Heights/etc., do I pay?

Property owners who drain to the County or Peoria Heights will still pay a stormwater utility fee because their property has access to the stormwater system. Everyone benefits from good stormwater infrastructure and drainage even if their property drains elsewhere. Their property would be impacted if the stormwater infrastructure failed. The City of Peoria is following industry standard and is charging everyone who is within city limits.

8. If I construct a best management practice because it's mandated by ordinance, can I receive a grant or credit?

If you are required to construct something by ordinance, you cannot receive a grant but you may be eligible for a credit. Grants reward green infrastructure construction when it isn't mandated, but rather the property owner is taking extra steps to improve their property.

Learn more at OneWaterPeoria.com