

Hermantown's Stormwater Utility

A new approach to an unfunded challenge

Stormwater, composed of falling rain and melting ice and snow, is a part of life in Hermantown and all Minnesota cities. Stormwater systems, which include the plans, processes, and programs for safely moving stormwater to where it needs to be, are city-wide systems with city-wide impact.

Hermantown added a Stormwater Utility for residents and businesses beginning in January of 2019.

“This utility allows us to comply with Minnesota MS4 requirements, and adequately maintain our stormwater infrastructure.” – Kevin Orme, Finance Director, City of Hermantown

Similar to neighboring communities like Duluth, who added their Stormwater Fee in 1998, communities are working to deal with stronger oversight and regulations at the state and federal level regarding stormwater management.

From culverts and ditches to stormwater ponds and bridges, stormwater systems are far reaching. Also far reaching is the impact of rain, snow, and ice, as the City makes certain public safety and environmental expectations are being met.

We know we will need to do more regarding stormwater going forward, so this has led to the addition of the Stormwater Utility.

Because we are all served by the City's stormwater systems, we are all contributing. Residents saw an increase to their current utility bill of \$7 per month starting in 2019, while residents not on city sewer or water received their first ever utility bill – for \$42 – in July. Those residents will be billed twice annually.

Commercial rates are calculated based on total square feet of impervious surface.

“This allows us to be proactive in the treatment and management of stormwater, which is important for water quality in our community and our region.” – Eric Johnson, Community Development Director, City of Hermantown