

## Understanding Baltimore County's Stormwater Remediation Fee

Extension Brief EBR-23  
January, 2014

Stormwater runoff originates during precipitation events when water flows over the ground. Impervious surfaces, such as streets and rooftops, increase runoff by preventing water from soaking into the ground. Water running over hard surfaces can pick up sediment, chemicals, debris, and toxins which are carried to local waterways. These pollutants prevent waterways from being fishable and swimmable.

In 2012, the State of Maryland passed the Watershed Protection and Restoration Program (HB- 987) which mandates that counties subject to a certain municipal stormwater permit institute a stormwater remediation fee. The purpose of the fee is to manage pollution carried by stormwater into local waterways.

The collected fees are placed in a dedicated fund and used to finance projects that treat polluted stormwater. Examples include such projects as stream and pond restoration, storm drain cleaning, stormwater facility inspection, maintenance and upgrades, tree planting, water quality monitoring, watershed planning, and stormwater educational programming. The Stormwater Remediation Fee (SRF) is similar to fees for other public services such as sewer, drinking water, and highways.

### Who is required to pay the Stormwater Remediation Fee?

The SRF applies to the nine largest counties in Maryland (Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Charles, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's) and Baltimore City that are federally required to treat stormwater runoff. Property owners within these jurisdictions, with

some exceptions, are required to pay the SRF. The fee structure is established independently by each county/city and differs across the State.

### What does the 2013 Stormwater Remediation Fee look like in Baltimore County?

Residential properties pay a fixed flat fee annually. The fee is nominal compared with other counties because Baltimore County allotted significant resources to improving water quality prior to the mandate. Residential rates are:

- Detached single family: \$39 annually
- Townhome/duplex: \$21 annually
- Condominium: \$32 annually

Commercial, industrial, and institutional properties pay the fee based on their impervious surface area. You can find an impervious surface area by entering your 10 digit parcel/tax number at Baltimore County's website:

<http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/budfin/customer-service/taxpayerservices/stormwaterfee.html>

The County offers hardship exemptions and credit/incentive programs:

A residential hardship exemption will apply to owner-occupied dwellings which qualify for at least one of the following tax exemptions:

- Baltimore County supplement to the Maryland State Homeowners Tax Credit (\$9-104 of the Tax-Property article of the Annotated Code of Maryland);

- The tax credit exemption for a disabled veteran or the surviving spouse of a disabled veteran (§7-208 of the Tax-Property article of the Annotated Code of Maryland);
- The property tax credit for surviving spouses of fallen law enforcement officers or rescue workers (§11-2-109 of the Baltimore County Code, 2003); and/or
- The property tax credit for disabled law enforcement officers or rescue workers (§11-2-109.1 of the Baltimore County Code, 2003)

Baltimore County does not give credit for stormwater remediation practices on residential properties. Commercial, industrial, and institutional properties may apply for a stormwater fee reduction of no more than 26 percent of the original fee. The fee reduction will be based on approved stormwater management facilities and designed runoff improvements. The supporting documentation must include design plans prepared by a qualified professional. To apply for this credit, contact the Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability at (410) 887-3733.

### **What can you do to help address stormwater runoff pollution?**

Among other practices, residents can install rain barrels, rain gardens, and porous pavers, and practice Bay-wise landscaping to help reduce stormwater runoff.

Always remember with stormwater - slow it down and soak it up!

### **Additional resources**

Maryland Department of the Environment  
Stormwater Fee FAQ:

<http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Maryland/r/Pages/StormwaterFeeFAQ.aspx>

Baltimore County Stormwater Remediation Fee:

<http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/budfin/customerservice/taxpayerservices/stormwaterfee.html>

Baltimore County Master Gardeners:

<http://extension.umd.edu/baltimore-county/master-gardeners>

House Bill 987 (HB-987):

<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmMain.aspx?ys=2012rs%2fbillfile%2fhb0987.htm>

Contact Krisztian Varsa ([kvarsa@umd.edu](mailto:kvarsa@umd.edu), (410) 771-1761), University of Maryland Sea Grant Extension, Watershed Restoration Specialist for Baltimore City, Carroll, Harford, and Baltimore Counties, to answer your questions about the fee and what you can do to reduce stormwater runoff on your property.

*Please note: This factsheet is intended to provide an overview of the stormwater remediation fee at the time of publication. For more updates and information please go to: [www.baltimorecountymd.gov](http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov).*

**Krisztian Varsa ([kvarsa@umd.edu](mailto:kvarsa@umd.edu)), Jennifer Dindinger ([jdinding@umd.edu](mailto:jdinding@umd.edu)), Amanda Rockler ([arockler@umd.edu](mailto:arockler@umd.edu)), Amy E. Scaroni ([ascaroni@umd.edu](mailto:ascaroni@umd.edu)), and Jacqueline Takacs ([takacs@mdsq.umd.edu](mailto:takacs@mdsq.umd.edu))**

This publication, *Understanding Baltimore County's Stormwater Remediation* (EBR-23), is a series of publications of the University of Maryland Extension and the Watershed Protection and Restoration Program. The information presented has met UME peer review standards, including internal and external technical review. For more information on related publications and programs, visit: <http://extension.umd.edu/watershed>. Please visit <http://extension.umd.edu/> to find out more about Extension programs in Maryland.

The University of Maryland Extension programs are open to any person and will not discriminate against anyone because of race, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin, marital status, genetic information, political affiliation, and gender identity or expression.