

Thurston County Water Resources

Stormwater Fee Credit Program

November 2012

A. Purpose of the Program

The stormwater fee credit program is designed to recognize schools, commercial businesses and other non-residential property owners whose activities support the County's stormwater management goals by granting these parcel owners up to a 50 % credit on their stormwater rates and charges.

B. State Certified Schools

Under this program state certified private or public school parcels are eligible for two separate stormwater rates and charges credits up to the maximum of 50% as set forth below

1. Stormwater Curriculum Credit – 40%

A school that provides storm water curriculum as set forth below may be eligible for up to a 40 % credit for storm water rates and charges.

a. Intent. The intent of these credits is to encourage all public and private schools to educate K-12 children and college-age students about community stewardship of Thurston County's water resources and stormwater pollution prevention. Further, these credits support teacher participation in approved local watershed education programs. School district properties, like others with impervious surfaces, contribute to surface water pollution. Schools can take direct actions to help the Storm and Surface Water Utility meet its goals. These credits benefit the public because:

- i. School district funds which would be spent on SSWU fees through a fee credit program can be used for enhancing water quality education; and
- ii. Schools can directly assist the utility goals by educating teachers and students about water resources and undertake some of the actual tasks involved in protecting those resources.

b. Application of Credit; to be eligible for the Storm water Curriculum Credit applicants must:

i. have an approved annual maintenance and inspection report filed with the storm water utility.

ii. provide as part of their official curriculum, instruction on water quality monitoring, nonpoint pollution prevention, groundwater aquifer protection and other topics related to water resources protection are eligible for a 40% reduction in their storm water fee. Approved curriculum materials may also include the "water wise" program, Enviroscape program, Project WET and Project Wild Aquatic. In lieu of these materials, schools may offer curriculum in the following topic areas:

- The hydrologic cycle
- Rainfall and its function in the environmental system
- Wetlands, streams, rivers, lakes and their ecological systems
- Effects of urbanization on surface water quality and quantity
- Water pollution from both point and non-point sources
- Land use effects on runoff and storm water (impervious surfaces, livestock, motor vehicles, gardening, etc.)
- Causes and effects of flooding
- Wetland ecology including: insects, mammals and birds, amphibians, their role in the ecosystem
- Salmonids (salmon and trout)
 - Species
 - Life cycle
 - Habitat requirements

- Wetland plants/native plants and their benefits
- Studies of the local watershed or stream basin in which the school district is located

If requested, Thurston County Stormwater Utility staff is available to provide advice and resources on identifying and obtaining additional curriculum materials.

iii. submit annual documentation confirming the adopted curriculum and hours of instruction.

2. Watershed Education Partners Credit – 10%

A school that supports existing environmental education partners set forth below may be eligible for up to a 10 % credit for storm water rates and charges.

a. Intent. The intent of these credits is to teacher participation in approved local watershed education programs. School district properties, like others with impervious surfaces, contribute to surface water pollution.

b. Application of Credit; to be eligible for the Watershed Education Partners Credit applicants must:

i. submit annual documentation confirming the types of support and the amount expended for partnership programs; and

ii. support existing watershed-based environmental education programs that provide instruction on water quality including water quality monitoring, nonpoint pollution prevention, groundwater aquifer protection and other topics related to water resources protection.

A. The County currently recognizes three environmental education partners (other organizations will be considered for qualifying partners on a case-by-case basis) including:

- i. South Sound GREEN (Global Rivers Environmental Education Network);
- ii. Nisqually River Education Project; and
- iii. Chehalis Basin Education Consortium.

B. Examples of support include bus transportation or substitutes for water quality monitoring events, annual Student Congress events, or other related field trips and water quality monitoring equipment.

C. Non-residential

Under this program, non-residential (including, but not limited to, retail, wholesale, or service businesses, offices, public buildings, and churches) parcels are eligible for three separate storm water rates and charges credits up to the maximum of 50% as set forth below.

1. Annual Facility Maintenance and Reporting Credit (25%)

A qualifying non-residential 1 parcel owner that provides Annual Facility Maintenance and Reporting as set forth below may be eligible for up to a 25 % credit for storm water rates and charges.

- a. Intent. The intent of the Annual Facility Maintenance and Reporting Credit is to recognize parcel owners that take proactive steps to regularly maintain and report their storm water management activities.
- b. Application of Credit. To be eligible for the Non-residential Fee Credit, applicants must
 - i. have an approved Maintenance and Inspection Agreement with Thurston County. This agreement commits the property owner to maintain facilities and implement a Pollution Source Control Program
 - ii. develop and submit a Spill Plan in accordance with the Thurston County Business Pollution Prevention Program.

2. Third Party Certification Credit (50%)

A qualifying non-residential parcel owner that provides Third Party Certification as set forth below may be eligible for up to a 50 % credit for storm water rates and charges .

- a. Intent. The intent of the Third Party Certification Credit is to offer incentives to applicants who voluntarily seek and receive certification from recognized third party agencies or organizations to implement storm water best management practices on their property.
- b. Application of Credit. To be eligible for the Third Party Certification Credit applicants must:
 - i. provide documentation for at least one of the following certifications:
 - Approved Conservation Plan– Thurston County Conservation District
 - Salmon-Safe Certification – Salmon-Safe, Inc.
 - Sustainable Forestry – Forest Stewardship Council
 - Green Building Certification – Built Green Washington, Built SMART, Earth Advantage, LEED and others

Other third party certifying agencies or products that meet the intent of this credit may be considered by the Thurston County Storm water Utility staff upon parcel owner request.

- ii. submit approved Maintenance Agreement with Thurston County, committing to maintain facilities and implement a Pollution Source Control Program.

3. Storm water Best Management Practices Credit (5, 10, and 25%)

a. Intent. The intent of the Storm water Best Management Practices (BMP) Credit is to encourage existing developed commercial business parcel owners to voluntarily make improvements to protect water quality through the reduction of impervious surfaces and enhanced water quality treatment.

b. Application of Credit. This credit is available to existing developed parcel owners that

- i. have an approved Maintenance Agreement with Thurston County, commit to maintain facilities; and
- ii. implement a Pollution Source Control Program as outlined in of the current Thurston County Drainage Design and Erosion Control Manual; and
- iii. implement additional Best Management Practices on their parcel. BMP credits can be combined with any of the other fee credits for up to a maximum total of 50% fee credit. There are three levels of credit available:
 1. 5% credit to parcel owners that implement one or more of the BMPs without documentation that a storm water benefit will be achieved.
 2. 10% credit to parcel owners that implement rainwater harvesting as provided for in the Thurston County Code section 15.06.040.
 3. 25% credit to parcel owners that implement a BMP or series of BMPs with documentation that verifies that a water quality benefit will be achieved consistent with the current Drainage Design and Erosion Control manual.

D. The Application Process

1. Stormwater Credit Fee Application

The County will accept one completed and executed application from qualifying parcel owners. An application shall be deemed complete when it contains all required information pertinent to the specific credit adjustment requested and executed by the parcel owner or an authorized agent.

2. Process Schedule

Applications will be accepted at any time but are processed annually on a “first-come, first-served” basis. Completed applications will be processed with the following schedule for the next billing year after it is approved.

- January 1 to June 30 applications are received and processed for approval of a fee credit on a first come first served basis.
- July1 through September 30 applications are received and may only be processed for the following year, as time allows.
- October 1 through December 31, applications will be received. However, due to the billing deadline of November 1, they will not be processed for the following billing year credit.

3. Certification and Term

Applications are limited to a single year. Qualifying applicant may renew their application annually through an abbreviated process subject to the above schedule. On the anniversary date of the approval and no later than July 1, the owner must provide certification in writing that activities or conditions on the property have not materially changed. Failure to complete the annual certification by August 1 may result in loss of the following year's fee credit.

The County will periodically access the site to inspect the condition of the stormwater facilities and practices consistent with the provisions of the credit application. Failure to allow property access may result in the revocation of any credit. Credits may be adjusted based on the County's inspection and review.

4. Appeals

Appeals of the fee credit program shall be the same as Section 15.06.060 of the Thurston County Code for Stormwater **Rate Adjustment and Appeals**.