



1. Why do we pay a stormwater fee?

The stormwater fee (“DRAINAGE” on your utility bill, only if you live in the city limits) funds the maintenance and improvement of the city's stormwater management system. Langley sits in a “bowl” where rainwater flows downhill to Puget Sound. Water runs off of impervious surfaces such as roofs and streets. A system of ponds, collectors, catch basins, pipes and filters handles stormwater runoff to prevent flooding, street deterioration and to ensure runoff water meets environmental standards when it flows into Puget Sound. Good streets and clean water require a good stormwater system.

2. Why is the rate increasing so much right now?

While the city council recognizes that times are hard for some people, they decided that the city needs to take responsibility for the adequate funding of the stormwater system. The stormwater fees have not increased in 15 years since the city first created a stormwater utility in 1994. At that time the stormwater fee was set at \$2.90 a month. In 2008 the stormwater fund had an annual deficit of over \$114,000 with street funds being used to cover the deficit. The 2009 rate increase allows the city to stop this deficit and cover annual operating expenses of the stormwater system.

3. Why are rates increasing each year from 2010 – 2013?

Last year the city contracted with an engineering firm to evaluate the stormwater system and make recommendations to update the plan. The 2009 Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan identified many deficiencies in the stormwater system and recommended a plan to make improvements. These yearly rate increases allow the city to set aside funds for stormwater capital improvements.

4. Why can't we just pay enough to maintain what we have and not make any improvements in the stormwater system?

Our current stormwater system is inadequate to prevent flooding and because of this a number of city streets are deteriorating. The cost of fixing city streets in the long-term will be higher than installing an adequate stormwater system. There are seven (7) immediate capital improvement projects identified (see back page) where there is no stormwater conveyance system, inadequate equipment, or improved water quality treatment is needed before water drains into Puget Sound.

5. Why should I pay a fee if there is no stormwater equipment in front of my property?

Everyone benefits from the city's stormwater system. It protects the streets and parking we use and catches the stormwater before it flows onto your property.

6. Aren't there better alternatives to handle stormwater than putting in drainage pipes?

The updated stormwater plan included changes to the city's code to include alternatives required in the city's Low Impact Development (LID) standards. Alternatives, such as rain gardens, will be used where the soils are appropriate.

7. If we don't have enough street funds, how did the city pay for recent improvements to Anthes and Camano?

These streets are classified as major or minor arterial streets and were therefore eligible for federal and state grant funding. Grant matching funds were acquired through a state fund that no longer provides matching funds for street improvements. Improvements to neighborhood streets must be paid from the city's street fund. The city recently used much of its street funds to pave two neighborhood streets, Decker and Furman, which had not been paved for more than 30 years.

8. What results will city residents see from paying higher fees?

- Immediately you will see better maintenance of the city stormwater system including increased mowing of ditches and cleaning out of catch basins and gutters.
- As the stormwater capital improvement fund is built-up, the city will begin completing the seven (7) immediate projects listed below, and will have matching funds for several stormwater capital improvements that are eligible for grant funding.
- As the street fund becomes replenished, the city will begin a regular routine of maintenance and paving of neighborhood streets. The city can also accumulate the approximately \$200,000 needed in grant matching funds for major street improvements that are planned on Second Street from Cascade to Anthes, and on Anthes from Second Street to First Street.

Stormwater Immediate* Capital Improvement Projects

PROJECT	FUND: Rates	FUND: Grants
6th Street: East of Anthes to Brookhaven Creek (12" drainage pipe)	\$ 190,000	
Edgecliff Drive: West of Furman Avenue (12" & 18" drainage pipe)	\$ 280,000	
Furman Avenue & Decker Avenue (12" drainage pipe)	\$ 490,000	
Anthes Avenue & First Street intersection (4 catch basins)	\$ 20,000	
Melson Alley: From Fourth Street to Sixth Street (12" drainage pipe)	\$ 130,000	
Four Existing Outfalls to Puget Sound: (water quality treatment)		\$ 200,000
Wharf Street: (12" drainage pipe and water quality treatment)		\$ 60,000
TOTAL	\$ 1,110,000	\$ 260,000

* These projects can be funded over time from the stormwater rate increases or available grants beginning in 2010. There is no priority order for the projects.

Please contact the public works director and/or your city council members if you have further questions or concerns:

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