



**Why do I pay the BPW a Storm Water Charge if I do not have catch basin in front of my home?** The BPW charges its customers a Storm Water charge to maintain the storm water infrastructure and manage its effects for the greater good of the community.

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**ISSUE: Storm Water Charges. The BPW has determined that funds are required to maintain the storm water system and plan for future improvements.**

**BACKGROUND:** Customers have asked: Why do I pay the BPW a Storm Water Charge if I do not have a catch basin in front of my home?

The Storm Water utility should be viewed differently from the other utility services you receive as customers of the Lewes Board of Public Works (BPW). The electricity, water and wastewater utility services and their attendant charges to you as a customer are based on what you consume or generate. How much electricity or water you use and how much wastewater you generate are the basis for the per-unit charges and the “ready to serve” charge that maintains those systems so that the infrastructure is available to you and supports your needs.

The Storm Water Fee, on the other hand, is charged to every customer of the BPW to pay for the stormwater system that protects us all during precipitation events in Lewes. Stormwater that does not soak into the ground becomes surface runoff and flows into the stormwater system. The Stormwater Fee is not charged to pay for a catch basin in front of your home or business. The monies collected under this BPW charge are used to cover the overall costs of the infrastructure of the Stormwater System. More importantly, the stormwater system keeps the essential roadways clear to enable travel on these roads during precipitation events.

At this time, Lewes stormwater is legally discharged, untreated, into the Lewes canal. It is anticipated that future Federal regulations implemented under the Federal Clean Water Act, as the legal framework for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit Program, will require Lewes and other utilities supporting municipalities to change the way they address discharge of water containing pollutants into waters of the United States. These future “unfunded mandates” will cost more to all BPW customers.

**STATUS:** The BPW continues to work with the City of Lewes, University of Delaware and other appropriate State and Federal agencies to improve storm water practices and policies in the areas served by the BPW. The \$5 Storm Water Fee covers maintenance to keep the storm water drainage pipes open throughout the service area and ensures that major road arteries are kept open in times of rain events and essential repairs for the “greater good of the community”. This fee only meets current operational and maintenance needs for the stormwater infrastructure.