

# Sustainable Stormwater Funding Outreach Plan



City of Portland

The Sustainable Stormwater Funding Outreach Plan was prepared for the City of Portland by Woodard & Curran and its project partners.



19 Oaks 



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

The purpose of this Outreach Plan is to develop a message and message delivery plan suitable to the City of Portland as it considers outreach to the public in the development and implementation of a stormwater use charge. This Plan provides research aimed at maximizing the effectiveness of outreach and seeks to inform the development of materials for use by the City as it moves forward with outreach efforts. The Plan identifies target audiences; proposes a message including identification of words and phrases likely to be well or poorly received by the public; and recommends communication channels for delivering the message.

The Plan conducted primary research, including a demographics evaluation, preliminary message testing, city-wide phone survey, and business listening sessions focused on how to maximize the effectiveness of sewer system funding outreach.

### 1.1.1 Defining the Need

Maintaining and operating sewer infrastructure, combined sewer overflows and polluted urban runoff are critical issues throughout coastal Maine, the region, and the nation. Many organizations, plans and reports have identified infrastructure and urban runoff management as a concern or have highlighted it as a priority here in the State of Maine.

- According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, wastewater is one of the top three infrastructure concerns for the State of Maine.
- According to the February 2010 report, *People & Nature: Adapting to Climate Change, Charting Maine's Course*, outdated stormwater infrastructure is one of the main infrastructure risks in the state. The report notes “*It makes sense to focus on taking action on a “no regrets” basis—for example, improving stormwater and wastewater infrastructure to protect water quality in any eventuality.*”
- The most recent Casco Bay Estuary Partnership’s Casco Bay Plan identifies five priorities for watershed protection the first of which is to minimize pollution loading from stormwater and combined sewer overflows.
- The City of Portland’s Comprehensive Plan identifies the local Public Services Department as the organization responsible for improve surface water quality throughout the City. The Department administers an ongoing program to abate combined sewer overflows (CSO) and improve the quality of urban runoff discharged in the City. The City is working with Maine Department of Environmental Protection (Maine DEP) to address Phase II Stormwater Management Regulations. CSO abatement and stormwater management are both identified as major initiatives in the Plan.

According to the Maine DEP, the City of Portland is responsible for approximately 40% of the 2 billion gallons of combined sewer discharges into waters of the State. While the City has addressed this issue over the past 15 years, it is now facing an anticipated \$170M investment over the next 15 years to address the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) discharges. And, while the City has a stormwater management plan in place, there is regulatory uncertainty if further capital investments will be required in the future related to stormwater quality improvement.

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To pay for the capital improvements, maintain, and operate the sewer system, the City is considering modifying how sewer charges are billed to customers in Portland. This change will address the disparity between who pays for sewer system improvements and the need to make those improvements in the first place. While the need for combined sewer overflow abatement and stormwater management efforts are driven partially by sewerage and partially by urban runoff in excess of sewer system capacity, combined sewer abatement and stormwater management efforts are solely funded through sanitary sewer fees, which are charged to Portland customers based on water use. This means that those that pay the sewer use charge and proportionally the largest water users are bearing the burden for combined sewer abatement and stormwater management, but may not be proportionally contributing to the problem.

The proposed modifications to billing would include an additional and separate fee based on the amount of runoff generated from a parcel. This new, fee structure would lower overall sewer rates for many businesses and spread the burden of paying for runoff, combined and wastewater management more equitably among all of those that contribute to the problem. Linking fees to BOTH water use and runoff volumes is fundamentally fairer than the current system and will lower annual sewer costs for many residents and businesses in comparison to what they would experience without a change in fee structure. Any change will require effective delivery of information about the rationale for changes to sewer fees to ensure public buy-in.

One of the greatest challenges facing funding municipal sewer infrastructure<sup>1</sup> is that the general public is mostly unaware of sewer infrastructure unless something goes wrong. The infrastructure is largely invisible (i.e. sewer infrastructure is mostly located below ground) and it is difficult for the general public to understand its value, function or the consequences of deferred maintenance, or to recognize the significant costs associated with operations and capital improvements. According to a survey of residents, it was found that 57% of residents are aware that the City maintains a combined sewer system and 70% of residents understand that heavy rains can cause raw sewage to dump into local waters. These statistics of the public's understanding regarding the extent of sewer infrastructure in the City and the environmental issues surrounding its deficiencies are essential to developing a successful outreach plan and thankfully it seems that the public is relatively knowledgeable of the subject already.

Effective public outreach is critical at this time to inform residents about the issues: why sewer system improvements are necessary and how there are more equitable ways to administer sewer fees. Sewer infrastructure investment is essential for long term viability of urban areas. Yet to the average citizen, the topic is complex, confusing and is typically secondary to other, more visible municipal issues such as education, roads and job creation. Failure of aging sewer infrastructure can damage roads, homes and businesses. Without solutions, potential long-term impacts on economy and environment will prove significant for the city, region and state.

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<sup>1</sup> Sewer is defined as “any man-made conduit that carries sanitary wastes, stormwater runoff, drainage waters and includes sanitary, combined and stormwater sewers.

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## 2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

### 2.1 METHODOLOGY

The development of the Outreach Plan was carried out for the City by Woodard & Curran and their subcontractors including Water Words that Work, 19 Oaks and OpinionWorks. Casco Bay Estuary Partnership funded the work.

#### 2.1.1 Demographics Research

Basic demographics research on residential, taxable and non-taxable properties within Portland and in two zip codes outside Portland was conducted. This demographics *snapshot* is to inform how outreach material should be communicated, identifies how Portland residents compare or contrast with adjacent communities or nationwide on particular demographics, and provides us with discrete population numbers in potentially relevant market segments for targeted outreach. Census and available market research information also provides a basic demographics profile of City residents. An evaluation of businesses within Portland and within particular standard industry classification codes was conducted to evaluate the distribution of business types in Portland, and link those business types to rate implications which in turn begin to quantify the magnitude and distribution of businesses that have increased or decreased annual costs associated with new or modified sewer fees.

#### 2.1.2 Preliminary Message Testing

In order to develop a preliminary list of appropriate messages, message testing through the “Due Diligence Test Panel” was conducted. The “Due Diligence Test Panel” is a web-based review process that provides low-cost evaluation of outreach materials through nationwide peer review comprised of United States residents who provide feedback on marketing materials and perform related tasks in return for payment. The feedback from the test panel is different from internal feedback from peer review for three reasons:

- Test panels have the perspective of the everyday citizen. They are not professionals in the field and have not participated in the drafting of the outreach materials.
- Test panels have never met the developer of the materials and will provide their feedback anonymously. Their feedback will not be influenced by their personal relationship to outreach material developers.
- Test panels closely approximate the demographic make-up (especially race and education) of the U.S. "public" than that of staff and board of most pollution control or municipal organizations.

Messages and message formats from stormwater user fee outreach efforts in various locations nationwide were tested in order to provide a basis for the Portland outreach strategy. Previously developed stormwater user fee messages were obtained for testing through solicitation of national stormwater list serves. Over 30 community outreach messages were obtained and four selected for testing, including one anti-stormwater utility message. The four messages were tested through the "Due Diligence Test Panel." The panelists were asked to evaluate the messages, answering the following questions:

- Does it seem that the government collects the money fairly?
- Does it seem that the government will spend the money wisely?
- Does it seem that the program will make a positive difference for the community?

- 
- Do the images get my attention?
  - Do the images help me understand the problem?
  - Do the images help me understand how my money will be used?
  - Does the piece have a clear image?
  - Could I explain the document to others without showing it to them after reviewing the document?
  - Was the document prepared with the general public in mind?
  - Is the issue important to society?
  - Is there urgency to addressing the issue now?
  - Will an issue like this affect my family?

### **2.1.3 Resident Survey**

A survey of city residents was conducted to quantify citizen level of understanding of stormwater and combined sewer infrastructure and to explore attitudes regarding financing this infrastructure. A random cross-section of 309 city residents were interviewed. The sample produced a margin of sampling error of  $\pm 5.6\%$  at a 95% confidence level.

The telephone survey identifies seven sections as follows and is included in Appendix A:

- General Mood and Climate
- Awareness/Perceptions of Stormwater/Combined Sewers
- Support for a Stormwater Fee
- Information Gathering
- Classifying the Survey

### **2.1.4 Business Listening Sessions**

Four informal small group discussions were held with businesses in the community. The meetings were held to facilitate conversation and input from businesses regarding, but not limited to, stormwater quality and infrastructure, its relative importance, preliminary message testing, preferred message delivery mechanism and/or the critical needs of the community to support future efforts by the City to develop sustainable stormwater funding policy. The groups consisted of twenty-three representatives from the business community (including non-profit entities).

### **2.1.5 Outreach Plan**

A draft outreach plan with recommended outreach messages and outreach vehicles was developed to largely rely on staff resources and minimizes extensive campaign effort requiring consulting support.

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## 3. PROJECT FINDINGS

### 3.1 DEMOGRAPHICS RESEARCH

#### 3.1.1 Resident Demographics Evaluation

The City resident demographics are presented in Appendix C and are compared with Cumberland County, a representative South Portland and Westbrook zip code and the United States, where applicable.

The following are the findings that are important to the development of the Outreach Plan:

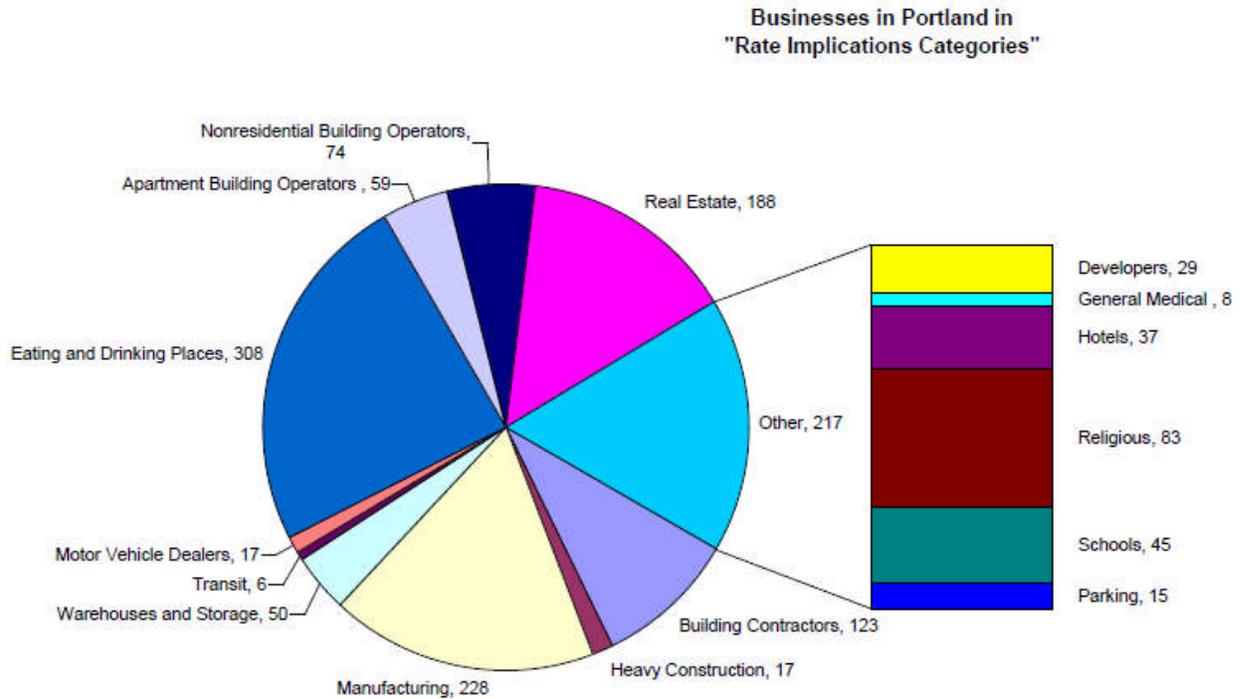
- The percentage of individuals with four-year college degrees is higher in Portland than the national average suggesting that messaging may be geared towards an educated population.
- Home ownership in Portland is much lower than adjacent communities or national averages. As it applies to outreach, the most appropriate message vehicle may not be direct targeting of households since those households may not be responsible for payment of utility fees. Mailings or door knob hangers may not be the appropriate message vehicle.
- Between 3-6% (1,800-4,000 individuals) of the population of Portland are likely to be receptive to environmental and conservation messaging.
  - Messaging based on volunteerism/activism linked to conservation issues (i.e. outdoor activities such as fishing, hiking and bird watching) will result in a greater numbers of individuals (5,600) sympathetic to the issue as compared to messaging based on volunteerism/activism linked solely to environmental issues (2,700 individuals). In general, a conservation message will likely be better received than a strictly environmental message according to the demographics in the Portland area.
  - Portland residents appeared less interested in environment, charity and news than neighboring communities according to Facebook statistics but consider themselves much more associated with liberal politics than the State of Maine as a whole.

In general, residential outreach efforts should focus on a conservation message compared to an environmental message. Messaging can be targeted to a college education level. Efforts should be targeted towards homeowners or property owners and not necessarily households to reach the residential market segment.

#### 3.1.2 Business Demographics Evaluation

The number of businesses (i.e. property classifications that are property owners) in Portland within particular Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes are shown in Appendix C. Figure 1-1 represents a segment of business population that will likely be affected by changes in sewer fees. Note that this representation is not a complete distribution of business types in Portland.

**Figure 1-1: Number of businesses in Portland likely to be affected by sewer fee change**



In consideration of the potential impacts under a modified fee structure, Portland’s position is somewhat unique in Maine as a City with extensive segments of the business community in the urban center (e.g. minimal impervious surface footprints and vertical development). This will allow many of the most common businesses in Portland (i.e. restaurants, apartment buildings, small businesses and certain nonresidential office building operators) to realize annual fee savings if a stormwater user fee is implemented. Under a future sanitary sewer fee increase scenario, with no new stormwater user fee, many of these same businesses would see an overall increase in annual fees.

This situation creates a very important outreach opportunity to inform targeted businesses that the new stormwater user fee may actually reduce their annual operating costs through redefining use fees from strictly sewer use to both a sewer and runoff use fee. Obviously, the opposite is also true in that many businesses outside of the urban center will see potential increases in annual sewer use fees, particularly by low sewer use, horizontal development businesses.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to segregate many business types between these two categories. Certain manufacturing and nonresidential building operators will potentially see a reduction in total fees, while others will see a total fee increase correlated with the type of development. This makes targeted outreach by SIC somewhat more difficult to implement, but more likely to be successful based on geographic location within the city.

Therefore the market segmentation identified in the Outreach Plan has been based primarily on geography as opposed to business-type.

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## 3.2 PRELIMINARY MESSAGE TESTING

A full summary of results are presented in Appendix C.

*Key Finding - “It is not about how the money is raised - it is about how the money is spent.”*

Review of the message testing on the four pieces indicate that outreach materials that did a better job of convincing readers that "the government will spend the money wisely" were more successfully received than messages that did not make the case about how money will be spent. In the most successful piece, from Toledo, Ohio, a specific section of the message is dedicated to “Use of Funds” with specific actions to result from the new fee. Other less successful pieces uses words like the fund “may be used for” or is silent on how and where funds will be spent.

In our judgment it is critical that any outreach, regardless of target audience, be very clear about where and how funds will be spent and on specific projects that are visible and real. A clear and non-legal description of how the City’s sewer ordinance obligates funds specifically for sewer use is necessary. This is an accountability issue and has informed the primary messages identified in the outreach plan. The reality that Portland will be paying for well-planned stormwater and combined sewer projects through a Sewer Fund that obligates funds for specific uses will greatly enhance any message.

## 3.3 SURVEY

The following are key findings from the phone survey with full survey results included in Appendix A.

### **Economic Stress**

Residents in Portland are under economic stress and unsatisfied with taxes and public spending. This is no different than the country as a whole. 33% of the public is worried about money, and 31% worry every day.

- Residents give the City a C-Plus grade for “wisely using the money it collects in taxes and fees,” with a majority (53%) giving the City a grade of C or lower.

### **Relatively Good Grades for the City**

The City receives relatively good grades for “greenery along streets and public areas” and for “controlling flooding during rain storms,” both of which earn a B-Minus. Casco Bay receives a relatively positive B-Minus score for the health of its waters.

### **Good Awareness of Storm Drain System and Sewer Overflows**

Awareness of the storm drain system and combined sewer overflows is high in Portland:

- 94% have heard of storm drains and 83% can picture one near where they live. These are strong numbers compared to other jurisdictions.
- 57% are aware the City has a combined sewer system, and 70% have heard that heavy rains can cause raw sewage to dump into local waters like Casco Bay.
- Not very many citizens feel directly affected by sewer overflows. Only 9% said they are at least occasionally affected in their neighborhood.

- Residents give the City a modest C-Plus grade for handling sewer overflows.

### Knowledge of the Current Fee Structure

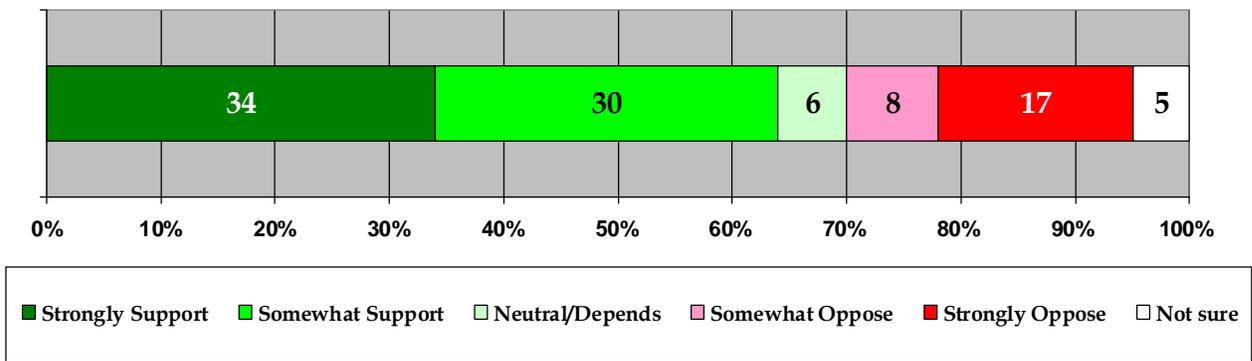
29% said the money to maintain the sewer system comes from their water and sewer bill; 18% said it comes from their property taxes; and 12% said both. One-third of residents (36%) said they were not sure where the money comes from.

Half of residents (53%) said their sewer service fee is calculated based on water usage. More than one-third (38%) do not know how it is calculated. The rest (9%) attributed scattered other methods.

### Support for a Stormwater Fee

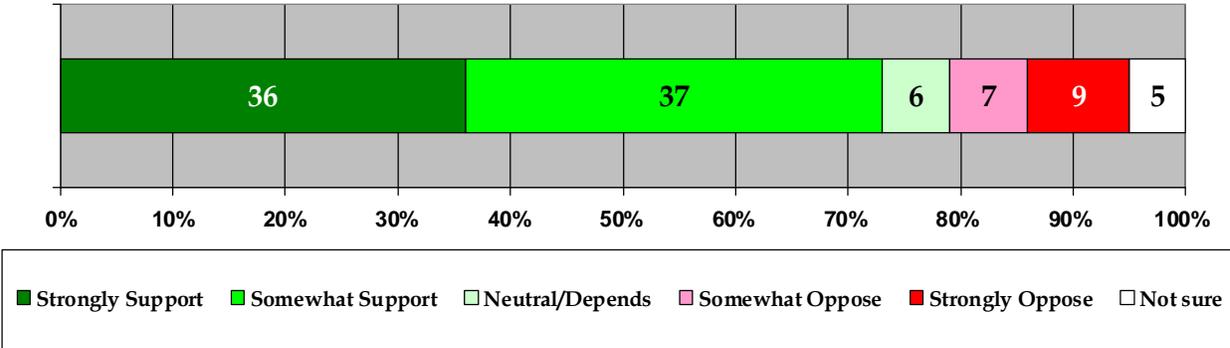
There is very strong support for a City stormwater fee among the residents of Portland. Initial support for a fee that is “reasonable” and recommended by City leaders “to solve the problem of contaminated drainage” stands at 64%, with only 25% opposed.

**Figure 1-2: Survey Question - Support for a Stormwater Fee if Leaders said the Money was Needed**



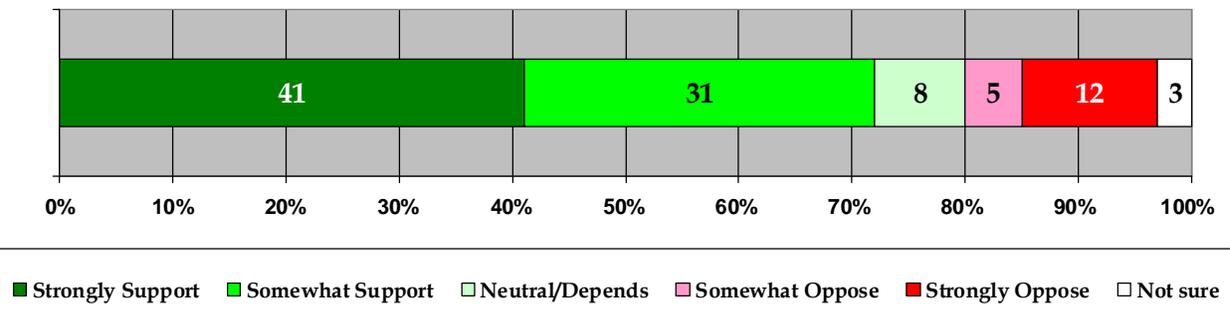
Knowing that “the City determined that some properties were paying a disproportionate share of sewer costs and proposed a new fee that was fair,” support rises to 73%, with only 16% opposed.

**Figure 1-3: Survey Question - If Some were Paying a Disproportionate Share and the New Fee was Fair**



Based on hearing a series of positive facts about the stormwater fee, support stands at 72%, with 17% opposed.

**Figure 1-4: Survey Question - After Hearing a Series of Positive Facts**



These are extraordinary numbers, and a sign that the fee proposal is starting off on a very positive footing with City residents.

In response to the open-ended question, “...what would you need to know about this new fee to support it,” residents expressed:

- a desire for detailed and specific information about the fee’s cost, its uses, and
- an absolute guarantee that it would be used for its intended purposes.

**Resonance of Key Facts about the Fee**

We tested the impact of a series of facts on support for the fee. Two ideas rise to the top of the list and should form the core of the messaging around this fee:

- 
- The fee will have a positive impact on the local economy, and
  - The fee will be dedicated and only used for its intended purpose.

In a strong second tier ideas include:

- Not just residents, but the business community too will help pay the fee, and
- The fee will help clean up Casco Bay.

**Table 1-1: Survey Question - Impact of Facts on Support for the Fee**

	5	4	3	2	1	Not Sure	Mean
	← more willing			less willing →			
29. The fee supports the local economy by protecting the coastal waters that...	56%	15%	17%	3%	7%	4%	4.15
20. This fee is dedicated and could only be spent for its intended purpose.	58%	12%	17%	2%	9%	3%	4.11
23. Not just residents, but the business community would participate, too.	51%	11%	25%	3%	9%	1%	3.93
28. A fee would help clean up Casco Bay.	46%	15%	19%	5%	11%	4%	3.84
22. It would include outreach to citizens about what they can do to reduce...	43%	15%	26%	5%	9%	3%	3.80
27. Residents and businesses could lower their fee by making improvements...	42%	16%	26%	4%	9%	3%	3.79
30. The fee would help the city comply with federal water law.	41%	11%	30%	4%	10%	4%	3.72
26. A fee will save money over the long run by helping pay deferred maintenance.	37%	18%	26%	4%	11%	4%	3.71
21. It would reduce flooding.	38%	16%	26%	6%	11%	3%	3.65
25. The new fee structure would lower water bills for some users.	39%	10%	27%	5%	13%	5%	3.61
24. A fee would be scaled based on how much water runoff the property...	32%	15%	27%	5%	17%	5%	3.43

**Other Information on the Survey**

The survey of Portland residents also examined preferred methods of consuming information in order to help target message delivery. A series of classification questions were asked to segment results by demographic categories as needed.

**3.4 BUSINESS LISTENING SESSIONS**

The following summarizes the business listening sessions including tabulation of voting results on various items. The meeting presentation is presented in Appendix B.

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## Meeting Highlights

*Name of effort:* “Give us something we can buy,” that’s what participants asked for – meaning that any need for new revenue should include a positive vision for a better future for the city and not simply focused on immediate need. Other participants indicated a strong preference for a fee name that is clearly descriptive of how the money will be used.

*Who delivers the message is important.* It was clear from the small group discussions that the City and/or the Portland Water District (PWD) should not be the sole information source. People expressed a strong desire for unbiased, scientific information establishing the challenges, deliverables and projected timelines for completion. Across the board, participants voiced support for third party validation of the city’s assertions in several of key points in the debate:

- The engineering plan and its cost: An engineering entity
- Infrastructure upgrades will satisfy state regulators: State regulators
- Infrastructure upgrades will actually solve the problem: A scientific entity

*How the message is delivered is important.* Participants want to receive briefing materials with a reasonable amount of advance notice, and then have an opportunity – in person or over the phone – to ask questions. The more directly the change will impact them, the more they expect the courtesy of a phone call to them directly. Information should be delivered in clear concise language (without jargon) that is accessible through a website, printed materials and updated through all common communication outlets.

*Accountability:* Participants want to be reassured that the city will use any additional revenue as promised. They place the most faith in a periodic audit by outside parties delivered in a user-friendly way via website or other outreach vehicle.

*Fairness:* Participants accept that assessing a new fee based on stormwater runoff from the property is fundamentally fairer than the current system – after we pointed it out. It was not readily apparent based on our description of how the fees are currently assessed and how they would be assessed in the future. It was also noteworthy that none of our participants recognized that they were likely to see lower overall bills, even though some of them would.

*New Program Management:* Participants expressed reservations at how a new fee would be calculated. Would the assessments be valid? Would the switch be well implemented? Would the cost of implementing a more complicated system eat up a large share of the extra revenue it raised?

*Credits:* Participants in our sessions do expect there to be some mechanism for evaluating onsite stormwater runoff reduction measures and awarding credits for these.

## Small Group Preferences

If you heard that the City was preparing to make changes to how your sewer fees are calculated, who would you most trust for information about the fee?

**Table 1-2: Small Group Preference - Who would you Trust?**

Trusted Source	Tally by type of entity			
Categories	Non Profit	Business	School	Totals
Scientist/Engineering - Third Party	4	11	4	19
3rd Party Unbiased	8	10	0	18
City/PWD Official	1	8	2	11
Chamber of Commerce	1	5	4	10
Trade Association	0	3	1	4
Regulatory Agency	1	2	0	3
Environmental Activists	0	2	0	2
News Media	0	2	0	2

If you heard that the City was preparing to make changes to how your sewer fees are calculated, how would you like to receive more information about it?

**Table 1-3: Small Group Preference - Who would you like to deliver information?**

Communication Channel	Tally by type of entity			
Categories	Non Profit	Business	School	Totals
Informational website	7	7	3	17
Printed mailing or package	2	10	3	15
Email	3	8	1	12
Group briefing/hearing (in person)	1	7	3	11
Personal call or meeting	2	5	2	9
Newspaper	0	3	0	3
Conference call	0	1	0	1
Social media (LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.)	0	1	0	1

If there is a recalculation of sewer fees, what steps can the City take to convince you that any funds collected will be used as promised?

**Table 1-4: Small Group Preference - What steps to take towards accountability?**

Accountability	Tally by type of entity			
Categories	Non Profit	Business	School	Totals
Annual Report	4	17	3	24
Third Party Audit	4	9	1	14
Bill Inserts (mail or electronic)	3	8	2	13
Briefing	1	4	2	7
Other (visual, website, hold themselves accountable)	1	3	3	7
Signs	2	1	1	4

If the City created a new fee to fund improvements to the storm sewer system and reduce polluted runoff, which name would best describe it?

**Table 1-5: Small Group Preference – What is the best name for this fee?**

Language	Tally by type of entity			
Categories	Non Profit	Business	School	Totals
Runoff Management Fee	4	14	2	20
Stormwater Fee	4	11	3	18
Pollution Prevention Fee	0	8	3	11
Combined Sewer Fee	1	4	2	7
Municipal Sewage Fee	1	3	0	4
Drainage Fee	2	1	0	3
Clean Water Fee	1	1	1	3
Green Fee	2	0	1	3

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## 4. OUTREACH PLAN

### 4.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Outreach Plan is to involve community leaders and residents in finalizing and implementing a new system for paying for sewer system improvements.

### 4.2 OUTREACH SUMMARY AND TIMELINE

We suggest that the outreach plan unfold in three phases, which are summarized below.

#### **Phase 1: Targeted Briefings**

As the Task Force prepares to submit its recommendations to City Council, City staff will take steps to provide potential project partners with personal briefings. This advance notice will come packaged with 3rd party validation of key components of the plan – the environmental need, the regulatory compliance imperative, the viability of the investment plan, and the necessary revenue to implement it.

Target Audiences for this phase of the outreach are:

- *State Regulators:* Brief Maine Department of Environmental Protection on the pending recommendations and seek cooperation in briefing other parties under future phases of this plan.
- *Science & Engineering Firms:* Brief scientific and engineering experts and invite them to review the proposed Task Force recommendations, impervious cover assessments, and budget forecasts – and vouch for the City’s findings when briefing other parties under future phases of this plan. Firms or organizations may include those that have previously developed combined sewer overflow abatement or stormwater management plans, have been involved in city capital improvements and operations, and/or third party entities that are engaged locally in science and engineering policy and practice.
- *Business Associations:* Brief business associations, such as the Chamber of Commerce, and invite them to help bring the proposal to the attention of the wider business community and seek cooperation in briefing other parties under future phases of the plan.
- *Listening Sessions:* The Sustainable Stormwater Task Force will hold one or more listening sessions with the public and invite residents to weigh in on general approach and logic of task force recommendations.

#### **Phase 2: Pre-Public Hearing Business Outreach**

In the second phase of outreach, the City will conduct a series of in-person meetings, conference calls, or public “listening sessions” with the following target audiences and with support of key partners identified in Phase I. This effort will occur prior to public hearings associated with the development of the new sewer ordinance.

#### **Phase 3: General Public Outreach**

Once the City Council moves forward on the Task Force recommendations and direct city staff to develop a new sewer ordinance, City staff will prepare to brief citizens at two junctures – first as it finalizes a new

sewer ordinance, and later as it prepares to begin charging the modified fees. In both cases, staff will prepare materials as more fully described in activity summaries below.

**Table 1-6: Outreach Timeline and Key Tasks**

Month	Dec-Feb	Apr	Apr-June	June	Summer 2012- Summer 2013
Outreach Activity	Task Force Finalizes Recommendations and presents to City Council	Council Workshop on Task Force Recommendations	Development of New Sewer Ordinance and Rate Structure	City Council Holds Public Hearings on Ordinance	City Implements New Rate Structure
Briefing Package Development and Key Stakeholder Meetings	X	X			
Task Force “Listening Sessions”	X	X			
Business Community Briefings			X		
Website		X (Phase 1)	X (Phase 1)		X (Phase 2)
Press Outreach				X	X
General Public Outreach (includes Basic Announcements and Public Briefings)				X	X

### 4.3 ARTICULATED MESSAGES

Based on input from Portland residents, business and community leaders, we recommend that the City state any changes to sewer fees in the context of a broader “investment” (i.e. vision for the future) package that will balance conservation goals and economic growth for decades to come rather than just short-term needs.

#### General Recommendations

A vision for driving change to the sewer fee is recommended. For example, the “2030 Clean Growth Action Plan” might resonate. Here are the rationales for each word in that name:

- 
- *2030.* This number captures the approximate time frame for completion of the Combined Sewer Overflow Abatement Tier 3 program.
  - *Clean.* This phrase succinctly captures residents' aspirations for a healthier environment.
  - *Growth.* This phrase succinctly captures business leader's desire for continued economic development/redevelopment and reduced uncertainty about city growth limitations due to combined sewer overflow or stormwater runoff regulatory concerns.
  - *Action Plan.* The word "action" addresses citizens' and business leaders' impatience with the pace of improvements and lingering concerns about how the city ended up with such a substantial backlog in the first place.

If legally viable, the city should label any new fee to be explicitly about what the funds will be used for: Runoff Management. Avoiding a number of terms that have been considered to date is recommended.

- *Stormwater:* If this term appears in the name of the fee, some residents may believe they are being charged for the stormwater (i.e. precipitation) itself
- *Utility.* This term will also lead some residents to believe they are being charged for the "delivery" of stormwater, which they neither want nor use.
- *Sewer.* Storm and combined sewers all capture and convey runoff, so the phrase "Runoff Management" accurately describes the purpose of the fee. Avoiding the term sewer in the fee name eliminates the need to explain the distinction between sanitary, storm, and combined sewers.

## Messages

The messages below have been developed to tout the key benefits of the vision and address concerns voiced by business leaders and residents in the research efforts conducted while preparing this plan.

- *Clean Growth:* Sewer system improvements will ensure the city can continue to grow into the future, while sustaining a healthy natural environment for residents and visitors to enjoy, and maintain regional competitiveness.
- *Definable Needs:* Sewer system maintenance needs -- and costs to meet these needs -- have been documented by a credible science and engineering entity.
- *Accountability:* Sewer funds are obligated to only sewer system projects under local law and to ensure accountability for the use of additional revenue, implementation of the repair and improvement plans will be periodically audited and results distributed.
- *Fairness:* New sewer rate calculations are fair, as opposed to the current billing system which is not. The less water you use or send into the sewer system, the less you pay to maintain and improve this system.
- *Cost-Savings:* Some businesses, including important City employers, and many residents will see lower overall bills.
- *Incentives:* Residents and businesses can lower their runoff management fees if they take steps to reduce runoff from their property.
- *Social Norm:* According to a recent survey, residents are receptive to the fee if they are convinced the money will be used as promised and will ultimately benefit the economy.

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**Local Images to be included in outreach materials**

- Before and after shots of infrastructure needing repair and after repair
- Storm drains and combined sewer outfalls
- Flooded streets and parking lots
- Flooded basements
- Repair crews at work
- Local tourist attractions dependent on clean water
- Local shellfish harvesting and shellfish processing industry

**Core Facts to be included in outreach materials**

- CSO program success to date (i.e. CSOs reduced/eliminated)
- Maintenance and Capital Improvement backlog needs
- Current sewer bill revenue and total additional revenue needed to be raised
- Before and after pie charts breaking out revenue and expense
- # of sewer overflows, basement backups, and other indicators of the extent of the problem
- Estimated number of "winners" and "losers" under new billing system
- Residential annual average cost increase under current system and new system
- Simple timeline for implementing and winding down aspects of the program

**Table 1-7: General Language Recommendations**

Terms to Emphasize		Rationale
Accountable		Addresses concern among businesses and residents that the City will use revenue for the stated purpose.
Fair		Addresses business leaders' concern that they have been – or will – pay their fair share of the costs.
Clean Water		Clean water consistently polls as everyday citizens' #1 environmental concern.
Healthy Environment		This phrase subtly reminds ratepayers of the connection between pollution and health. The city can also describe a "healthy business environment"
Investment		Describe all monies that the city will spend towards infrastructure repairs and upgrades as "investments in a healthy environment" and "investments in a healthy business environment"
Fee		This phrase evokes something you pay for because you use it.
Balance		Use this phrase to describe how the Task Force and City Council members have taken all needs into account and come up with the best possible solution.
Polluted Runoff Polluted Stormwater		Residents do not immediately associate "runoff" nor "stormwater" with "pollution." In most cases, add the prefix "polluted" before these terms to help them recognize the urgency of controlling this problem.
Terms to Avoid	Substitute	Rationale
Tax	Investment, Fee	The phrase "tax" evokes arbitrary costs and funds that will likely be mismanaged.
CSO, TMDL, MS4, and all other acronyms	Plain English descriptions of these terms	Ratepayers and most business leaders are unfamiliar with these terms and mostly likely uninterested in learning them.
Impervious Surface	Parking lots, roofs, driveways, and other surfaces that send water to the sewer system.	Explicitly identifying the impervious surfaces will help ratepayer and business leaders focus their attention where we want it to go.
Nonpoint Source Pollution	Polluted runoff Polluted stormwater	The term is not well understood.

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## 4.4 OUTREACH ACTIVITY SUMMARIES

### Activity #1: Briefing Package Development

- A draft presentation and briefing package should be prepared and it should be presented to the organizations listed below with the goal of seeking the involvement of these organizations in bringing the matter to the attention of City business leaders in subsequent phases of the Outreach Plan. The following organizations are suggested for review of the briefing package and presentation:
- Relevant Maine Department of Environmental Protection wastewater and stormwater staff
- Casco Bay Estuary Partnership and/or other relevant engineering and science entity
- Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Portland Downtown District
- Maine Real Estate and Development Association (MEREDA)

The briefing package should include:

- A PowerPoint presentation which articulates key messages, shows local images and conveys core facts,
- Summary of survey results from this project, which show rate support for the general concepts of the Task Force's recommendations, and a
- A single page (double sided) fact sheet. The first page summarizes the vision as a draft and the second page is a FAQ about the proposed sewer fee changes that Council will consider. The PowerPoint will should be cobranded with the logo of a science or engineering entity that is vouching for the City's funding expectations.

The need for the "bigger picture" 2030 Clean Growth Action Plan vision should be explained and ideas should be solicited from these organizations to finalize the briefing package materials.

*Sequence:*

- Message Delivered: Set up briefings with key individuals/agency representatives directly.
- Audience Responds: Key individuals meet with project staff.
- Follow-up: Follow-up 48 hours after meeting to determine willingness to help with further outreach and to solicit comments on briefing package materials. Finalize briefing materials.

### Activity #2: Task Force "Listening Sessions"

Hold "Listening Sessions" in the community to inform citizens about the work of the Task Force and their general findings and then listen to the community's perceptions of the proposed solution.

The purpose of the meeting should be to gather information from citizens regarding the possible changes to sewer billing system. The project survey questions will be used to guide their interaction with session participants. Core message of fairness and clean growth should be primary presentation message.

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Dates and locations for the listening sessions should be selected, and the City should be responsible inform citizens about the events.

*Sequence:*

- Message Delivered: Publicizes listening sessions with notices and emails.
- Audience Responds: Citizens attend the meetings.
- Follow-up: Task Force members follow up via email with those who participate to provide timeline for remainder of process.

**Activity #3: Business Community Briefings**

As the City Council considers modifications to the sewer fees, convene a series of briefings for the business community on the Task Force proposal.

The briefings should target organizations (and their membership) as identified below:

- Portland's Industrial Pre-Treatment Program Permitted Organizations
- Portland's Downtown District
- Maine Real Estate and Development Association (MEREDA)
- Maine Department of Economic and Community Development

These organizations have been selected based on geographic location within Portland, represent key business interest in Portland or the State, and/or are likely to be high water users who would be most benefited by the modified billing system.

City staff, a city councilor, business partner, representatives from a science/engineering entity, and state/federal regulators should be on hand at these briefings to summarize the situation and answer questions. The briefings will be open to all businesses -- but should be promoted to those organizations identified above.

*Sequence:*

- Message Delivered: Business partners should alert their members and provide the briefing materials in advance of meeting. City officials should place personal calls to those business that stand to gain or lose the most.
- Audience Responds: Business leaders attend the briefings.
- Follow-up: City officials and business partners should follow up via email with those who participate to provide timeline for remainder of process and offer to answer their questions and to express desire for business leader attendance at council hearings on new ordinance.

**Activity #4: Press Outreach**

As Portland City Council considers modifications to the sewer fee, reporters should be invited to tour sites around the City and interview certain individuals on the issue. Press outreach should begin as soon as the City Council schedules first public hearing on the ordinance. Time press release and tour in order to promote press release days before the first public hearing.

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Reporters should receive the same materials that business leaders receive -- the PowerPoint presentation and fact sheet/FAQ document. Reporters should be brought on a tour of infrastructure hotspots, recent repairs/improvements, and relevant project sites to take pictures and interview key figures whose personal stories reveal the need for the solutions, such as:

- Homeowners whose basements have flooded repeatedly and where City has responded to issue. Example: “West End” project completed by City in 2010 to address basement backups.
- Businesses facing uncertainty in redevelopment due to location within combined sewer overflow drainage areas.
- Businesses facing challenges from flooding. Example: “Bayside Area” - Whole Foods with photos of flooded streets.
- Commercial fishing and recreational businesses dependent on local water quality and Casco Bay such as; Portland Yacht Services, Portland Schooner Co., Downeast Duck Adventures, Maine Foodie Tours, Eastern Mountain Sports, etc.

*Sequence:*

- Message Delivered: Reaches out to journalists.
- Audience Responds: Journalists decide to participate.
- Follow-up: Answer follow up questions and track down key facts requested by reporters.

#### **Activity #5: Website**

Anticipating questions from businesses and residents, prepare an informative and coherent website that provides ratepayers with the information they need -- while simultaneously making an effort to win their support of the new program.

The website should be developed in two phases:

- basic briefing package information, completed while drafting amendments to the sewer ordinance and prior to seeking adoption of the ordinance amendments; and
- Expand the website to include additional information regarding proposed rates, billing structure and administration and a rate calculator.

The website should be designed so that ratepayers can eventually use this website to sign up to receive periodic updates on projects that have been completed using funds collected under this program or which otherwise demonstrate that the new funds are being used for their stated purpose. Preliminary design of the website should include:

*Pages on the Site:*

All pages on the site should repeat the core messages of the outreach effort. The pages will feature the recommended photos of the outreach effort.

*First website phase:*

- About the Program

- 
- Photo Gallery
  - FAQs
  - Timeline for Implementation

*Second website phase:*

- Understanding Your Bill (click on areas of the bill and see pictures of what the money is used for)
- Lower Your Bill
- Rate Calculator
- Subscribe for Updates

*Sequence:*

- Message Delivered: Include the site URL in all materials about the rate change.
- Audience Responds: Ratepayers visit the website and subscribe for email updates.
- Follow-up: Ratepayers can also receive periodic email alerts regarding program progress. The website becomes the ongoing avenue for annual reporting and audit results.

**Activity #5: Basic Announcements**

Advance notice of the forthcoming changes -- including messages in each monthly bill (written or electronic) for three months before the recalculated fees are charged should be provided to ratepayers. Any messaging included in bill inserts should vary slightly from previous public messages and should include the following.

- Starting on a certain date, ratepayers will see a change in billing from Portland Water District.
- Fees will be broken into 3 fees -- water, sewage treatment, and runoff management.
- The total amount of a bill may go up or down.
- To learn more about the change, see the website or call for a free package of information.
- Public meetings will be held to answer questions.
- In the months prior to the revised bills arriving, the City will send a press release to local media about the change.

*Sequence:*

- Message Delivered: Bill inserts and press releases.
- Audience Responds: Elect to visit the website or call for more information.
- Follow-up: Rate payers visit the website to learn more -- or call to receive basic briefing package. Ratepayers can also receive periodic email alerts regarding program progress.

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### **Activity #6: Public Hearings and Briefings**

If the Council approves modifying sewer rates and ordinance revisions, formal sets of briefings for businesses and residents should take place. It is recommended that the briefing continue to make the case for the program -- but provide more explicit information on how the fees will be calculated and what steps a rate payer must take to reduce their bill.

The briefings should be held within the year before the new bills start to arrive in rate payers' mailboxes and inboxes.

Update the original version of the PowerPoint provided to the business community, incorporating details of the ordinance as approved by the Council.

Sequence:

- Message Delivered: Publicize meetings with notices, emails, and press materials.
- Audience Responds: Citizens and businesses attend the meetings.
- Follow-up: Send follow-up emails to those who attend offering to answer their questions. Rate payers visit the website to learn more -- or call to receive an information package. Ratepayers can also receive periodic email alerts regarding program progress.

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## **APPENDIX A: PHONE SURVEY**





12. Which term, (*rotate*): [“stormwater” or “drainage”], does a better job of describing what we have been talking about?

- Stormwater ..... 46%
- Drainage ..... 40%
- Other word (*Volunteered; specify.*) ..... 1%
- They’re both good (*Volunteered*) ..... 5%
- Not sure ..... 9%

13. Have you ever heard that some of the city has what is known as a “combined sewer” system, meaning that the city’s sewage and its stormwater or drainage both flow through the same pipes?

- Yes, have heard ..... 57%
- No, have not heard ..... 41%
- Not sure ..... 2%

14. Have you ever heard that when there is a heavy rain the combined sewer can overflow, dumping raw sewage into local waters, like Casco Bay?

- Yes, have heard ..... 70%
- No, have not heard ..... 29%
- Not sure ..... 1%

15. Are you personally affected by these combined sewer overflows in your neighborhood? (*If yes*): Does that happen frequently, occasionally, or only rarely?

- Frequently ..... 3%
- Occasionally ..... 6%
- Rarely ..... 7%
- Not affected ..... 76%
- Not sure ..... 8%

*(If yes in Q.13 or Q.14):*

16. Going back to that A to F scale, what grade would you give the City for its effectiveness in dealing with combined sewer overflows into local streams and Casco Bay?

A (4)	B (3)	C (2)	D (1)	F (0)	Not sure	Mean
<i>highest</i> ←		→ <i>lowest</i>				
6%	35%	36%	10%	2%	10%	2.38

(All):

17. As far as you know, does the City get the money to maintain the storm drain system and the wastewater system from your water and sewer bill, your property taxes, or some other way?

Water and Sewer bill .....	29%
Property taxes.....	18%
Both (Volunteered).....	12%
Rent (Volunteered).....	*%
Other (Specify.).....	5%
Do not pay for those services (Volunteered).....	1%
Not sure/Refused .....	36%

18. Do you know how your residential sewer service fee is calculated? (Read list.)

Water usage .....	53%
Neighborhood area .....	3%
Number of bathrooms.....	2%
Property Size.....	2%
Or something else (Specify.) .....	1%
(Do not read): Not Sure .....	38%

**Support for a Stormwater Fee**

19. If leaders of the City said more money would be needed to solve the problem of contaminated drainage into our local waters, and they proposed a fee that was reasonable, would you be likely to support or oppose that? (If support/oppose): Is that strongly or just somewhat {support/oppose}?

Strongly support .....	34%
Somewhat support .....	30%
<b>Support (Total).....</b>	<b>64%</b>
Neutral/No opinion (Volunteered) .....	2%
Somewhat oppose .....	8%
Strongly oppose .....	17%
<b>Oppose (Total).....</b>	<b>25%</b>
Depends on the amount (Volunteered).....	4%
Not sure/Refused .....	5%

I would like to read you some facts about how this money would be used. Please rate each fact on its own using a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means it would make you much more willing to support such a fee, 3 means it makes no difference, and 1 means much less willing to support it. The first is... *(Read and randomize facts, Q.20-30.)*

- 20. This fee is dedicated and could only be spent for its intended purpose.
- 21. It would reduce flooding.
- 22. It would include outreach to citizens about what they can do to reduce contaminated runoff.
- 23. Not just residents, but the business community would participate, too.
- 24. A fee would be scaled based on how much water runoff the property owner sends into the storm drainage system.
- 25. The new fee structure would lower water bills for some users.
- 26. A fee will save money over the long run by helping pay deferred maintenance costs for the City's drainage and combined sewer infrastructure.
- 27. Residents and businesses could lower their fee by making improvements to their property to reduce stormwater runoff.
- 28. A fee would help clean up Casco Bay.
- 29. The fee supports the local economy by protecting the coastal waters that fisherman, clambers and recreational businesses depend on for their livelihoods.
- 30. The fee would help the city comply with federal water law.

	5	4	3	2	1	Not Sure	Mean
	← more willing				less willing →		
20. This fee is dedicated and could only be spent for its intended purpose.	58%	12%	17%	2%	9%	3%	4.11
21. It would reduce flooding.	38%	16%	26%	6%	11%	3%	3.65
22. It would include outreach to citizens about what they can do to reduce...	43%	15%	26%	5%	9%	3%	3.80
23. Not just residents, but the business community would participate, too.	51%	11%	25%	3%	9%	1%	3.93
24. A fee would be scaled based on how much water runoff the property...	32%	15%	27%	5%	17%	5%	3.43
25. The new fee structure would lower water bills for some users.	39%	10%	27%	5%	13%	5%	3.61
26. A fee will save money over the long run by helping pay deferred maintenance..	37%	18%	26%	4%	11%	4%	3.71
27. Residents and businesses could lower their fee by making improvements...	42%	16%	26%	4%	9%	3%	3.79
28. A fee would help clean up Casco Bay.	46%	15%	19%	5%	11%	4%	3.84
29. The fee supports the local economy by protecting the coastal waters that...	56%	15%	17%	3%	7%	4%	4.15
30. The fee would help the city comply with federal water law.	41%	11%	30%	4%	10%	4%	3.72

31. If leaders of the City determined that some properties were paying a disproportionate share of sewer costs and proposed a new fee that was fair, would you be likely to support or oppose that? (If support/oppose): Is that strongly or just somewhat {support/oppose}?

Strongly support .....	36%
Somewhat support .....	37%
<b>Support (Total).....</b>	<b>73%</b>
Neutral/No opinion (Volunteered) .....	5%
Somewhat oppose .....	7%
Strongly oppose .....	9%
<b>Oppose (Total).....</b>	<b>16%</b>
Depends on the amount (Volunteered).....	1%
Depends on who pays the fee (Volunteered).....	*%
Not sure/Refused .....	5%

32. In light of all we have discussed, if you knew that all these facts accurately described the fee, would you be likely to support or oppose the idea? (If support/oppose): Do you feel that way strongly or not so strongly?

Strongly support .....	41%
Somewhat support .....	31%
<b>Support (Total).....</b>	<b>72%</b>
Neutral/No opinion (Volunteered) .....	6%
Somewhat oppose .....	5%
Strongly oppose .....	12%
<b>Oppose (Total).....</b>	<b>17%</b>
Depends on the amount (Volunteered).....	2%
Not sure/Refused .....	3%

(All except those who support the fee strongly or somewhat in Q.32):

33. All things considered, what would you need to know about this new fee to support it? (Open-ended; see verbatim responses at end of Questionnaire.)

Nothing/Not sure .....	31%
Mentions something (Specify.) .....	69%

**Information Gathering**

*(All):*

- 34. How often do you do each of these things...? Read a local newspaper?
- 35. (How often do you do each of these things...?) Access the Internet for news of current events.
- 36. (How often do you do each of these things...?) Visit the City of Portland website.
- 37. (How often do you do each of these things...?) Use so-called social media like Facebook and Twitter.

- Almost every day
- At least once or twice a week
- Less than that
- Never
- (DO NOT READ):* Not sure/Refused

	Daily	Weekly	Less than that	Never	Not Sure
Read a local newspaper	63%	18%	10%	8%	*%
Access the Internet for news of current events	57%	17%	6%	19%	*%
Visit the City of Portland website	2%	8%	48%	41%	1%
Use so-called social media like Facebook	26%	15%	8%	51%	*%

**Classifying the Survey**

38. These last few questions are to classify the survey only. What is your age? Is it...? *(Read categories.)*

- Less than 35 ..... 10%
- 35 – 49 ..... 32%
- 50 – 64 ..... 33%
- 65 or over ..... 25%
- (DO NOT READ):* Not sure/Refused ..... \*%

39. What is the last grade in school that you completed? *(DO NOT READ LIST.)*

- Less than high school degree ..... 2%
- 12<sup>th</sup> grade/High school diploma ..... 21%
- Some college/Associate's degree ..... 23%
- 4-year/Bachelor's degree ..... 32%
- Graduate work ..... 22%
- Not sure/Refused ..... 1%

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40. Are you registered to vote?

Yes..... 96%  
No ..... 4%  
Not sure/Refused ..... \*%

41. In the past two years, have you contacted an elected official about an issue that was important to you, or attended a public hearing or political meeting?

Yes..... 55%  
No ..... 44%  
Not sure/Refused ..... 1%

42. What is your zip code at home? (Acceptable range: 04101 – 04124)

04101 ..... 17%  
04102 ..... 28%  
04103 ..... 55%  
Other (Specify.) ..... 1%  
Not sure/Refused ..... \*%

(Not asked; by observation):

43. Gender

Male..... 52%  
Female..... 48%

**Q11. As far as you know, what happens to rain water that runs off into your local storm drain?**

A WATER SHED.  
BACK COVE.  
BACKS UP AND BLOCKS THE STREET.  
BACKS UP.  
DOWN.  
GOES INTO THE GROUND.  
GOES INTO THE NEAREST WELL.  
GOES THROUGH A RAIN GARDEN AND GETS A LITTLE BIT FILTERED THERE AND THEN IT GOES TO A WATER TREATMENT BEFORE IT GOES TO THE BAY.  
GOES TO A SEWER SYSTEM.  
I GUESS IT COLLECTS, BUILDS UP OR SOMETHING.  
I GUESS IT GOES IN THE SEWER.  
INTO MY CELLAR.  
IT GOES BACK TO BOBE AREA.  
IT GOES INTO MY HOUSE. I GET 3 FEET OF WATER IN MY HOUSE.  
IT GOES INTO THE BASEMENT.  
IT GOES INTO THE GROUND.  
IT GOES INTO THE PIPES.  
IT GOES IT INTO THE SEWER SYSTEM.  
IT SOMETIMES GETS CLOGGED UP. SOMETIMES THERE IS TOO MUCH WATER. IT FLOODS THE STREET.  
NOT GOING TO A SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT.  
POLLUTES WATER.  
POND.  
SEWAGE BANK.  
SEWER SYSTEM.  
SEWER.  
SOMETIMES OVERFLOWS.  
THEY DRAIN THE WATER IN MY YARD. I NEED TO MAKE SOMETHING.  
TO THE STREET.

**Q12. Which term, (*rotate*): ["stormwater" or "drainage"], does a better job of describing what we have been talking about?**

I WOULD SAY RAINWATER.  
NEITHER  
STORM DRAIN.  
STORM DRAINAGE.  
STORM SEWERS.

**Q17. As far as you know, does the City get the money to maintain the storm drain system and the wastewater system from your water and sewer bill, your property taxes, or some other way?**

BOND ISSUES.  
COMBINATION OF DIFFERENT SOURCES.  
COMBINATION OF GOVERNMENT AND SEWER AND WATER TAXES.  
EVERYTHING, JUST EVERYTHING.  
FEDERAL FUNDS.  
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OR STATE GOVERNMENT.  
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, THE STATE, AND OTHER LOCAL RESIDENTS.  
FEDERAL MONEYS.  
I DON'T THINK IT PAYS FOR THE SEWER AS MUCH.  
I THINK I DO, SOMEHOW.  
SOME FROM THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT IN TERMS OF LOANS.  
SOME OTHER WAY, A MIX OF THEM.  
STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING AND SOME LOCAL TAXES.  
TAXES.  
THEY ARE GETTING FEDERAL GRANTS TO SEPARATE THE STORM WATER AND SEWAGE.

**Q18. Do you know how your residential sewer service fee is calculated?**

METERS ON THE HOUSES.  
LOCATION AND THE WAY YOU KEEP YOUR PROPERTY.  
WELL, THIS IS A LOW RENT OPERATION HERE AND THEY HAVE A TREMENDOUS DRAIN FOR FREE HOT WATER. AND IN A LOW INCOME HOUSING AREA HERE FOR A LOT OF PEOPLE, SO MY GUESS WOULD BE ALL THOSE MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN, BUT A BREAK IN THE WATER.  
I DO NOT PAY RESIDENTIAL WATER FEE.  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

**Q33. All things considered, what would you need to know about this new fee to support it?**

A LOT PROBABLY. JUST, LIKE BE MORE INFORMED AND KNOW MORE ABOUT IT.  
ALL THE DETAILS.  
ASK THE FACTS. OPEN FORUM TOWN MEETING, ETC.  
DETAILS OF WHO, WHAT, WHERE.  
EXACTLY WHAT IT WAS FOR, I GUESS.  
FOR EVERY FEE THERE IS A BUREAUCRACY THAT SPENDS THAT MONEY FOR THEIR OWN GAINS. GET THAT MONEY AND ACTUALLY SPEND IT FOR WHAT IT'S INTENDED FOR.  
GUARANTEED THAT THE PROPERTY TAXES WOULD NOT INCREASE.  
HOW IT WOULD PERSONALLY AFFECT THE GROUP HOME.  
HOW MUCH IMPACT IT WOULD HAVE ON THE AVERAGE WORKING PERSON.  
HOW MUCH IT WAS GOING TO BE AND HOW THEY RATED IT. MEANING, HOW MUCH A BUSINESS WOULD PAY TO A RESIDENT. HOW THEY WOULD MONITOR THE RUN-OFF.  
HOW MUCH THE COST WOULD BE TO ME. WHAT IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING OUT THERE,  
I CAN'T AFFORD ANY MORE FEES. I AM MAXED OUT. I AM DONE.  
I DON'T NEED TO KNOW ANYTHING BECAUSE I WON'T SUPPORT IT.  
I NEED TO KNOW HOW THE FEE WOULD BE ASSESSED AND CALCULATED AND HOW THEY WILL MEASURE THE WATER USES.  
I NEED TO KNOW THAT THE CITY WAS USING MY MONEY MORE WISELY BEFORE I WOULD SUPPORT ADDITIONAL FEES.  
I NEED TO KNOW THE DETAILS, NOT JUST VAGUE STATEMENTS. THIS POLL IS ALL VAGUE.  
I NEED TO KNOW THE FEES COST, HOW LONG IT WOULD LAST AND ANY INCREASES. PLAN ON DOING WHAT TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM.  
I THINK IT WOULD BE NICE IF THEY WOULD SEND SOMETHING IN THE MAIL TELLING THE DETAILS ABOUT THIS FEE, IN ORDER FOR PEOPLE TO ACTUALLY WANT TO PAY THIS FEE.  
I WANT IT WRITTEN IN CEMENT THAT THE MONEY WOULD BE USED FOR IMPROVEMENTS AND THAT IT WOULDN'T GO ANYWHERE ELSE.  
I WOULD HAVE TO HAVE TRUE FACTUAL INFORMATION BASED ON NON-PARTISAN RESEARCH. IT HAS TO BE TRUE RESEARCH, DONE BY EXPERTS.  
I WOULD HAVE TO SEE THE PROPOSAL SO I CAN READ IT.  
I WOULD JUST NEED TO KNOW A WHOLE LOT MORE, JUST A LOT MORE.  
I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF THEY WOULD TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT THINGS.  
I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW THE COST.  
I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FEE. I CAN'T REALLY SUPPORT IT IF I DON'T KNOW WHO IS DOING IT.  
I WOULD NEED TO NO WHO'S GOING TO DO IT. BECAUSE OF ALL THE BRAIN BOGGLES IN PORTLAND, I WOULD WANT TO KNOW A LOT MORE.  
I WOULD NEED TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE FEE IS STRUCTURED AND HOW IT WOULD APPLY TO EVERYONE. MACRO OVERVIEW OF EVERYTHING.  
I WOULD WANT TO SEE IN WRITING WHAT THE FEE ENTITLES THE PERSON TO OR NOT, OR WHAT WE, WHAT IT DOES AND WHAT IT DOES IN MORE DETAIL.  
I WOULDN'T SUPPORT IT.  
IF THERE WAS A PROBLEM IN THE CITY, I WILL KNOW ABOUT IT. I DON'T THINK IT CONCERNS ME.  
IF THERE WAS A PROBLEM. AS FAR AS I KNOW THERE IS NO PROBLEMS.  
IF THEY COME AND SHUT MY SEWER OFF, THEN I WOULD GET A FEE.  
I'M OPPOSED TO ANYTHING FOR THE SIMPLE REASON THAT FEES ADMINISTERED TO ANY INDIVIDUAL, ORGANIZATION OR BUSINESS OR HOMEOWNER, I'M AGAINST THAT BECAUSE THAT'S A FORM OF TAXATION IN ONE SENSE. THAT'S A LOADED QUESTION.  
IT'S NOT APPLICABLE.  
JUST HOW THE PREVIOUS MONEY, HOW THE CITY USED IT.

---

LIKE, I'M NOT HAPPY ABOUT ANY BECAUSE I'M MORE WORRIED ABOUT HEALTH INSURANCE AND I DON'T HAVE ANY.  
MORE ABOUT THE WATER DRAINAGE.  
MORE INFO.  
MORE INFO.  
MORE INFORMATION.  
MORE INFORMATION.  
SIZE OF THE FEE.  
THAT I WOULDN'T HAVE TO PAY ANY MORE MONEY IN MY WATER BILL. I THINK MY WATER BILL IS HIGH AS IT IS.  
THAT THE CITY DID THEIR BEST TO MEET THE FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS OR THE EPA IN SEPARATING THE COMBINED STORM WATER WITHIN THE INITIAL TIMEFRAME OF THE EPA. AND THEY DID NOT ACCELERATE THE SCHEDULE, THEREBY THEY DID NOT EXCEED THE TIME.  
THAT THEY WOULD GET RID OF SOME OF THE OTHER PROJECTS THAT ARE NOT SO USEFUL AND PUT IT IN THIS ONE.  
THE ACTUAL TRUTH. NOT LET PEOPLE SAY TO GET PEOPLE TO GET WITH IT. LIKE I SAID, EVERYBODY LIES. THE ACTUAL TRUTH. THE ACTUAL TRUTH, ONCE I HEAR THAT, I CAN DECIDE.  
THE AMOUNT.  
THE BOTTOM LINE IS I DON'T WANT TO PAY ANYTHING FOR IT AND THE ECONOMY AND THE JOB SITUATIONS ARE CRAPPIE.  
THERE ARE ENOUGH FEES. I DON'T KNOW WHY WE HAVE TO HAVE MORE.  
THEY ALREADY WASTE TAX MONEY.  
THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RUNOFF WOULD BE PAYING FOR THE BIGGER SHARE.  
UNDERSTAND BETTER HOW THEY ARE GOING TO INFLUENCE THE FEE.  
WELL, I HAVE TO KNOW THE BOTTOM LINE FINANCES, AND WHAT PROCEDURE THEY WILL FOLLOW, WHAT IT ENTAILS.  
WHATEVER THEY TELL US. EVERYTHING ELSE DOESN'T HAVE RUNOFF.  
WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?  
WHO IS GENERATING THIS IDEA, WHAT REGIONS OF THE CITY IT WILL EFFECT, AND WHAT EXACTLY IS HAPPENING TO CASCO BAY.  
WHO'S GOING TO PAY, AND HOW MUCH? IS IT GRADUATED, AND HOW DO YOU MEASURE?  
WHO'S PAYING IT? LIKE, IF BUSINESS PAY OR HOMEOWNERS.  
WHO'S SUPPORTING IT AND WHO'S SUPPORTING IT. THAT USUALLY TELLS ME WHAT'S GOING ON. FOR EXAMPLE, ENVIRONMENTALISTS AND POLITICIANS WOULD GIVE ME A REASON. BUT IF A FISHERMAN DID, I MIGHT KNOW. JUST MORE FACTS, I GUESS. WHATEVER IT TAKES.  
WHY THEY ARE CHARGING.  
YES, I WOULD NEED TO KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING, THE FACTS.

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## **APPENDIX B: SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS**



Welcome!



## Introductions

### **Hosts:**

Shay Bellas, Jeff Ryan, Stephen Schuit, 19 Oaks

Zachary Henderson, Woodard & Curran

Eric Eckl, Water Words That Work

## Meeting Goals

To provide input to a City of Portland Task Force on the best ways to engage and inform the business community in potential changes to how sewer fees are assessed.

**City officials have made no final decisions on any matters that will be discussed here.**

## The Spirit of Today's Discussion



## Ground Rules

We want to hear everybody's opinion today.

Please speak your mind, *especially* if you disagree with somebody else in the room.

Please speak your mind *politely*, even if you strongly disagree with somebody else in the room.

Please give others a chance to speak.

Comments will be recorded but not attributed.

## Agenda

- Introductions
- Situation Overview
- Communications Preferences
- Current and Alternate Models
- Accountability
- Language Preferences
- Wrap Up

## Situation Overview

### Water Pollution: What's the Problem?

We are here to talk about 2 related problems:

1. Raw sewage entering brooks and Casco Bay
2. Polluted runoff entering our brooks and Casco Bay.

The city has signed a consent order to solve the first problem: raw sewage into Casco Bay, technically known as Combined Sewer Overflows.

Combined Sewer Overflows have two causes:

- Sewer systems that are too small and in poor repair
- High volumes of runoff -- stormwater -- that enter and overwhelm the sewer system

## Water Pollution: Where it *Really* Comes From



## Polluted Runoff Solution #1 Repair and Upgrade the Old System



## Polluted Runoff Solution #2: Reduce Stormwater Volume



More trees, water absorbent pavement, "green" infrastructure, etc. These measures reduce the amount of runoff that enters the system.

## Polluted Runoff: Next Steps

City Council has committed to an aggressive schedule to reduce pollution from sewer overflows into Casco Bay and tributary brooks. They are under a consent order to do so.

*Their commitment: \$170 million over the next 15 years -- over and above current levels.*

A city task force is examining how other cities have responded to similar challenges and is preparing to make recommendations to the City Council.

## Communication Preferences

### Trusted Source

If you heard that the city was preparing to make changes to how your sewer fees are calculated, who would you most trust for information about the fee:

- City or Water District Official
- Trade Association
- Chamber of Commerce
- Environmental Activist
- News Media
- Scientific or Engineering Firm

## Communication Channel

If you heard that the city was preparing to make changes to how your sewer fees are calculated, how would you like to receive more information about it:

- Group briefing or hearing (in person)
- Conference call
- Printed mailing
- Email
- Informational website
- Social Media (LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.)
- Personal Call or Meeting
- Newspaper

## Current and Alternate Fee Models

## Portland's Model: Current

Calculated By:	Sewer bill is based on water use
Payer Sees:	Bill payer sees separate line items for water and sewer
Pros:	We're all used to it
Cons:	Sewer fee tied to water use, not storm sewer use Revenue not enough to solve the problem

## Alternate #1: Across the Board Sewer Rate Increase

Calculated By:	Raise sewer rates
Payer Sees:	Bill payer sees separate line items for water and sewer
Pros:	Most straightforward City gets the revenue it needs
Cons:	Sewer fee tied to water use, not runoff volume All ratepayers see an increase

## Alternate #2: Separate Line Item

<b>Calculated By:</b>	Add new drainage fee to existing bill, based on estimated amount of runoff from property
<b>Payer Sees:</b>	New line item on the water and sewer bill.
<b>Pros:</b>	Rate payers see where their money goes Some rate payers see smaller overall bill
<b>Cons:</b>	Some rate payers see larger overall bill Must calculate fee property-by-property It's new

## Discussion

<p>Calculating drainage and combined sewer costs based on water use</p>	<p>VS.</p>	<p>Calculating drainage and combined sewer costs based on runoff volumes</p>
---	------------	--

## Discussion: Accountability

If there is a recalculation of sewer fees, what steps can the city take to convince you that any funds collected will be used as promised:

- **Briefing:** A city official briefs your trade association on the legal requirements governing the program
- **Bill Inserts:** The city includes before-and-after pictures of completed work in water bill
- **Annual report:** Detailing accomplishments with statistics and data on progress towards solving the problem
- **Signs:** Posted at each construction site that explain the purpose of the project and the source of the funds
- **Other:** What other steps could the city take to address your concerns in this area?

## Language Testing

IF the city created a new fee to fund improvements to the storm sewer system and reduce polluted runoff, which name would best describe it:

- Combined Sewer Fee
- Drainage Fee
- Stormwater Fee
- Runoff Management Fee
- Pollution Prevention Fee

## Language Testing

Fee	VS.	User Fee
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## Wrap Up

- Thank You
- Next Steps

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## **APPENDIX C: DEMOGRAPHICS AND MESSAGE TESTING**

## ATTACHMENT 1: RESIDENT DEMOGRAPHICS



## Memorandum

To: Zachary Henderson, Woodard & Curran

From: Eric Eckl

Re: Population Profile of Portland, Cumberland County, Westbrook, and South Portland

Date: 9/14/2011

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Thank you for the opportunity to be of service. This report compiles relevant information about the City of Portland and surrounding jurisdictions. This information will be helpful for the purpose of planning an outreach effort to alert residents about a forthcoming stormwater utility.

### About Our Sources

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Here is a quick introduction to the data sources we cite here:

The **U.S. Census** provides basic demographic information about populations. The U.S. Census is unique in that it attempts to count each and every individual, instead of sampling, estimating, or extrapolating. U.S. Census data is basic, but it also the most accurate, representative, and unbiased information provided in this report.

To explore U.S. Census information in more depth, point your browser to <http://www.census.gov>.

Water Words That Work LLC's **Audience Targeter** compiles and synthesizes individuals' transactional paper trail -- licenses, property records, credit card purchases, memberships, warranty cards, etc. The Targeter analyzes and interpret these histories to identify individuals who are likely to be receptive to messages and opportunities you put in front of them. For example, the Audience Targeter identifies individuals who buy fishing licenses and equipment, regardless of whether they consider themselves to be anglers or not. You may purchase the mailing addresses and some phone numbers for the individuals identified here. Audience Targeter information is subject to all the flaws inherent to large databases -- duplicate records, changes in addresses, etc.

To explore Audience Targeter information in more depth, point your browser to <http://waterwords.usadata.com>.

**Facebook** provides information about its users and its users only. The information is valuable because the user base is very broad - roughly 1 in 3 U.S. adults. You can contact these individuals by purchasing advertising and engaging in various promotional activities on Facebook. Facebook collects information from its users from their personal profile information, status updates, and the polls, quizzes, games, and other applications they use.

To explore Facebook user information in more depth, login to Facebook using your private account and click the "Advertising" link at the bottom right. You will have to start the process for creating an ad to gather information about Facebook users in your area.

## Basic Census Data

The U.S. Census Bureau defines "population" as all people, including citizens, foreigners legally residing in the United States, and those living here illegally. Data are 2009 estimates for US, City of Portland and Cumberland County, ME. Zipcode area data only available from 2000 Census.

Jurisdiction	Population, 2009	% of U.S. Population	# of Households (2005-2009)	Average # Per Household (2005-2009)
United States	307,006,550	100%	112,611,029	2.6
Maine	1,318,301	.4%	542,617	2.36
Portland	63,008	.02%	29,714	2.08
Cumberland County	278,559	.09%	114,142	2.34
South Portland	23,976	.01%	10,562*	2.27
Westbrook	16,638	.01%	7,265*	2.29

Population Information for the [United States](#), [Maine](#), [Portland](#), and [Cumberland County](#)  
Population and Household Information for [South Portland](#) and [Westbrook](#)

\* # of households estimated by dividing population by average # per household

## Population Diversity Snapshot

The U.S. Census uses a complex set of definitions for races other than "white." For the sake of simplicity, we focus on the classification of "white" vs. all others.

Jurisdiction	% White	% Speak Language Other Than English at Home
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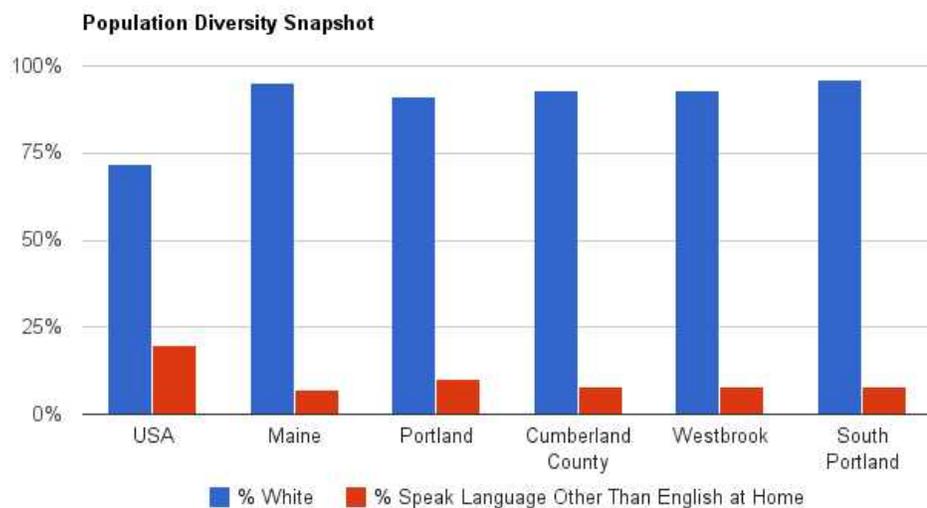
Water Words That Work, LLC

1069 West Broad Street, Suite 200, Falls Church, VA 22046 703.829.6732

<http://waterwordsthatwork.com>

United States	72%	20%
Maine	95%	7%
Portland	91%	10%
Cumberland County	93%	8%
South Portland	93%	8%
Westbrook	96%	8%

Diversity Information for the [United States](#), [Maine](#), [Portland](#), and [Cumberland County](#)  
Diversity Information for [South Portland](#) and [Westbrook](#)



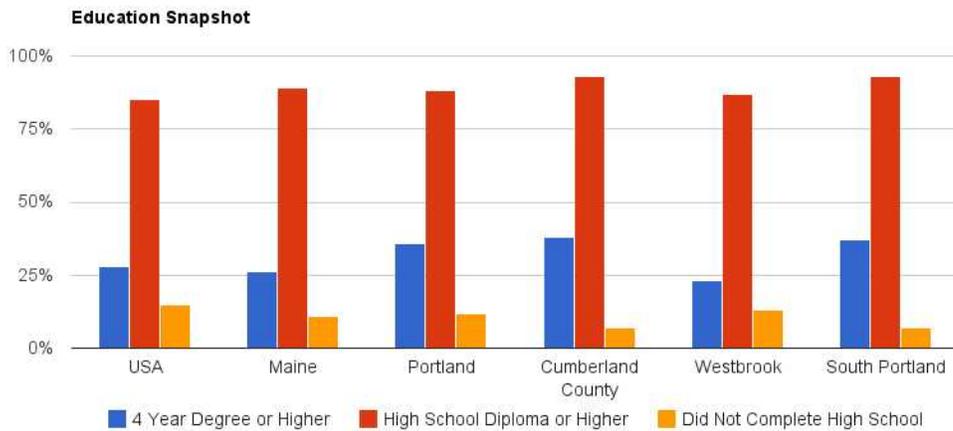
## Education Snapshot

The Census reports on the educational attainment of those aged 25 and older.

Jurisdiction	4 Year Degree or Higher	High School or Higher	Did not complete High School*
United States	28%	85%	15%
Maine	26%	89%	11%
Portland	36%	88%	12%
Cumberland County	38%	93%	7%
Westbrook	23%	87%	13%
South Portland	37%	93%	7%

Education Information for the [United States](#), [Maine](#), [Portland](#), and [Cumberland County](#)  
 Education Information for [South Portland](#) and [Westbrook](#)

\*Subtracting High School or Higher from 100%

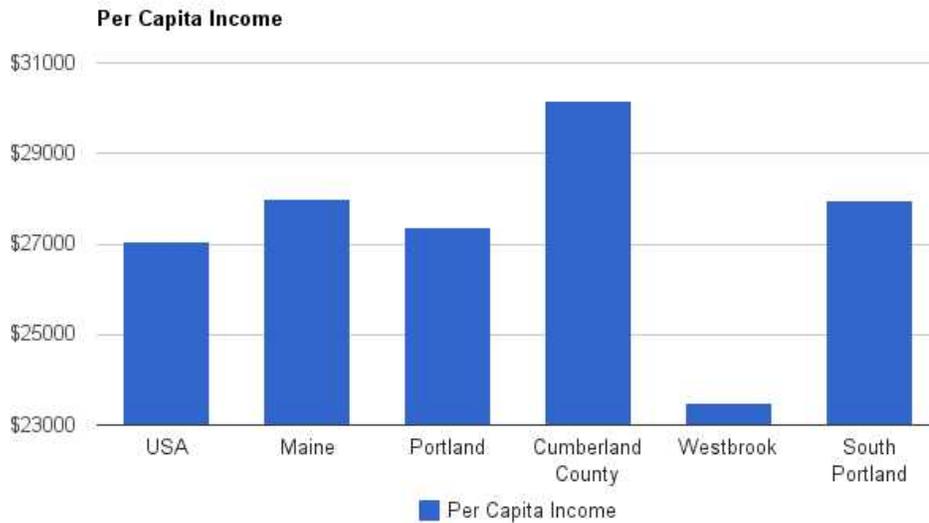


### Per Capita Income

The U.S. Census tallies the per capita income by dividing household income among all members of the household.

Jurisdiction	Per Capita Income
United States	\$27,041
Maine	\$24,980
Portland	\$27,351
Cumberland County	\$30,159
Westbrook	\$23,482
South Portland	\$27,945

Income Information for the [United States](#), [Maine](#), [Portland](#), and [Cumberland County](#)  
 Income Information for [South Portland](#) and [Westbrook](#)



### Other Prosperity Indicators

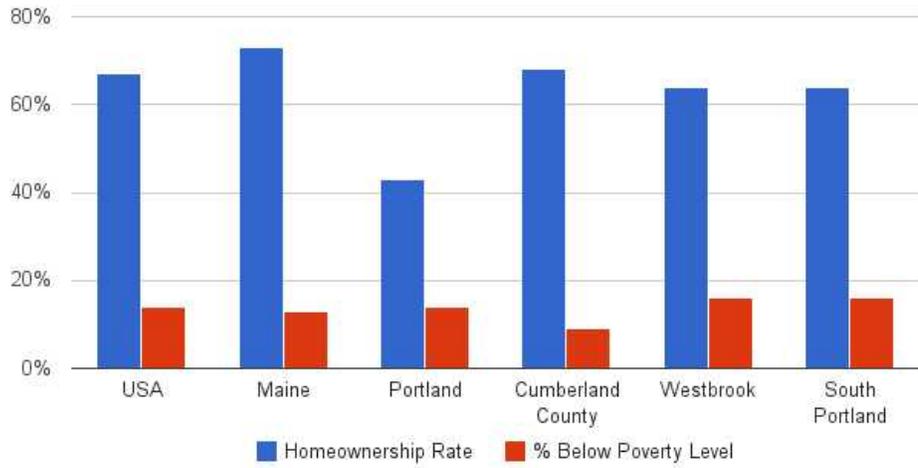
The U.S. Census defines the homeownership rate as the percent of individuals living in a home owned by their household. In other words, children who live in a home owned by their parents are considered to be homeowners.

Jurisdiction	Homeownership Rate	% Below Poverty Level, Individuals, Persons
United States	67%	14%
Maine	73%	13%
Portland	43%	14%
Cumberland County	68%	9%
Westbrook	64%*	16%*
South Portland	64%*	10%*

Prosperity Information for the [United States](#), [Maine](#), [Portland](#), and [Cumberland County](#)  
 Prosperity Information for [South Portland](#) and [Westbrook](#)

\* Defined slightly differently, "Individuals Below Poverty Level"

### Other Prosperity Indicators



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<http://waterwordsthatwork.com>

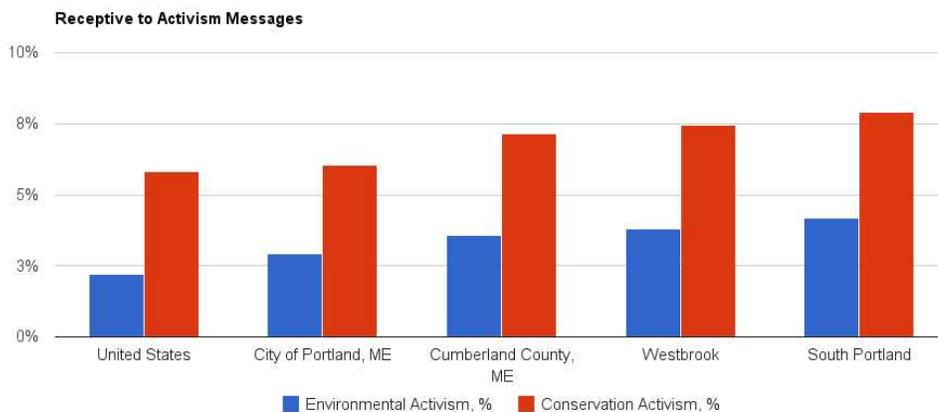
## Audience Targeter Information

In this section, we provide information on the absolute number of records in the database that meet relevant criteria. To allow comparisons between the makeup of various jurisdictions, we also provide information about the % of the population (as reported by the Census) that this number amounts to.

### Receptive to Activism Messages

"Receptive to environmental activism messages" are those records flagged for environmental issues AND politics and current affairs. "Receptive to conservation activism messages" are those records flagged for outdoor recreation (fishing, birdwatching, hiking, camping) AND politics and current affairs.

Jurisdiction	Environmental Activism, #s	Environmental Activism, %	Conservation Activism, #s	Conservation Activism, %
United States	6809075	2%	17928376	6%
City of Portland, ME	1854	3%	3820	6%
Cumberland County, ME	10106	4%	20114	7%
Westbrook	663	4%	1302	7%
South Portland	1050	4%	1975	8%

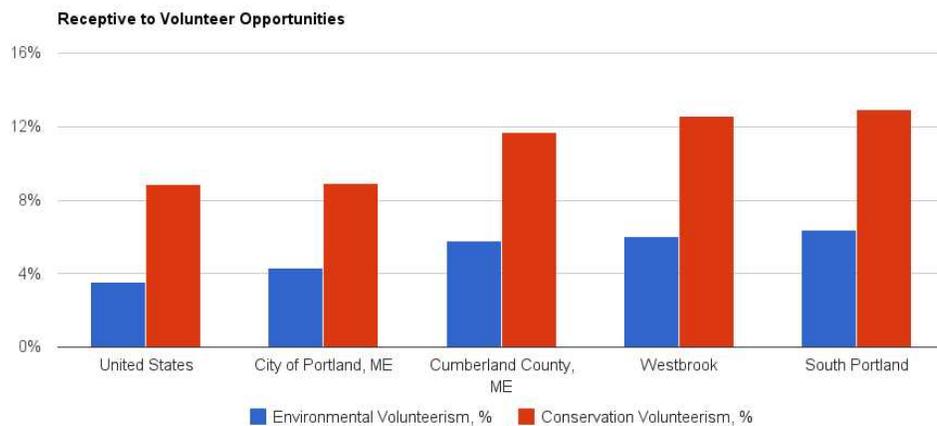


### Receptive to Volunteerism Messages

"Receptive to environmental activism messages" are those records flagged for both interest in environmental issues AND community affairs and charities. "Receptive to conservation activism messages" are those records flagged for both outdoor recreation (fishing, birdwatching, hiking,

camping) AND community affairs and charities.

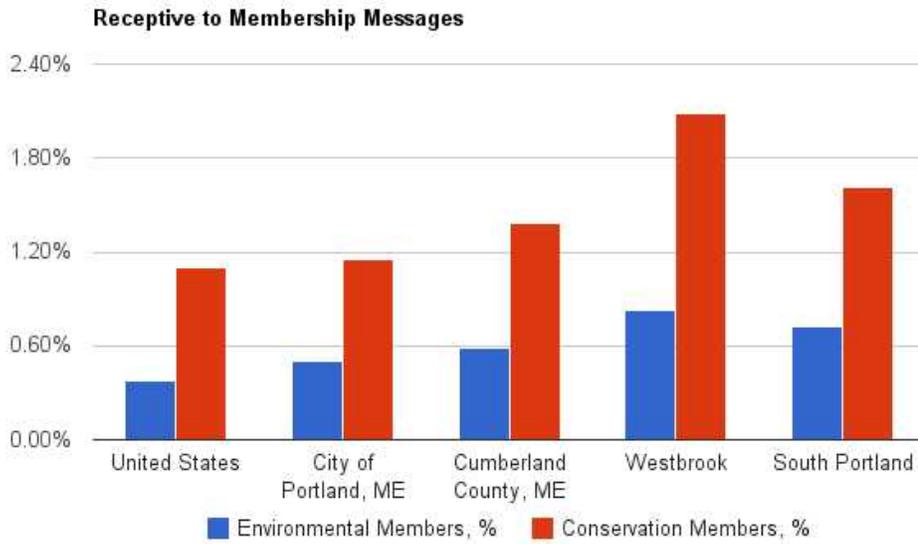
Jurisdiction	Environmental Volunteerism, #s	Environmental Volunteerism, %	Conservation Volunteerism, #s	Conservation Volunteerism, %
United States	10882018	4%	27356643	9%
City of Portland, ME	2703	4%	5629	9%
Cumberland County, ME	16289	6%	32970	12%
Westbrook	1054	6%	2196	13%
South Portland	1599	6%	3240	13%



### Receptive to Membership Appeals

"Receptive to environmental membership messages" are those records flagged for both environmental issues AND joining membership clubs. "Receptive to conservation activism messages" are those records flagged for both outdoor recreation (fishing, birdwatching, hiking, camping) AND joining membership clubs.

Jurisdiction	Environmental Members, #	Environmental Members, %	Conservation Members, #	Conservation Members, %
United States	1160904	0.38%	3387416	1.10%
City of Portland, ME	315	0.50%	729	1.16%
Cumberland County, ME	1654	0.59%	3897	1.38%
Westbrook	145	0.83%	364	2.08%
South Portland	180	0.72%	404	2%

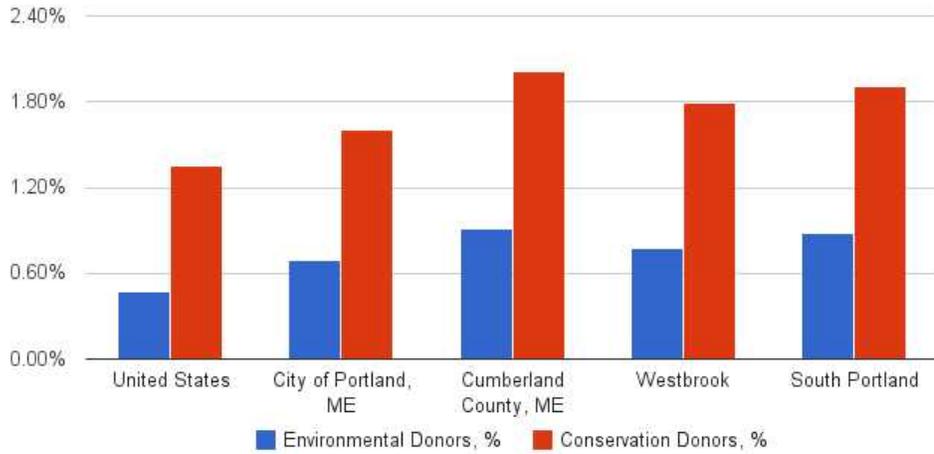


### Receptive to Donation Appeals

"Receptive to environmental donation opportunities" are those records flagged for both environmental issues AND making charitable donations. "Receptive to conservation donation opportunities" are those records flagged for both outdoor recreation (fishing, birdwatching, hiking, camping) AND making charitable donations.

Jurisdiction	Environmental Donors, #	Environmental Donors, %	Conservation Donors, #	Conservation Donors, %
United States	1450880	0.47%	4173317	1.35%
City of Portland, ME	435	0.69%	1013	1.61%
Cumberland County, ME	2580	0.92%	5669	2.01%
Westbrook	135	0.77%	313	1.79%
South Portland	219	0.88%	477	1.91%

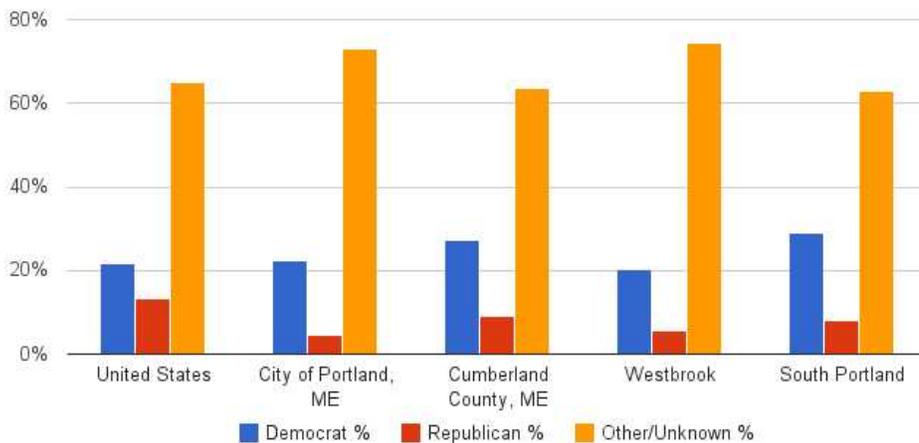
### Receptive to Donation Opportunities



### Political Party - Head of Household

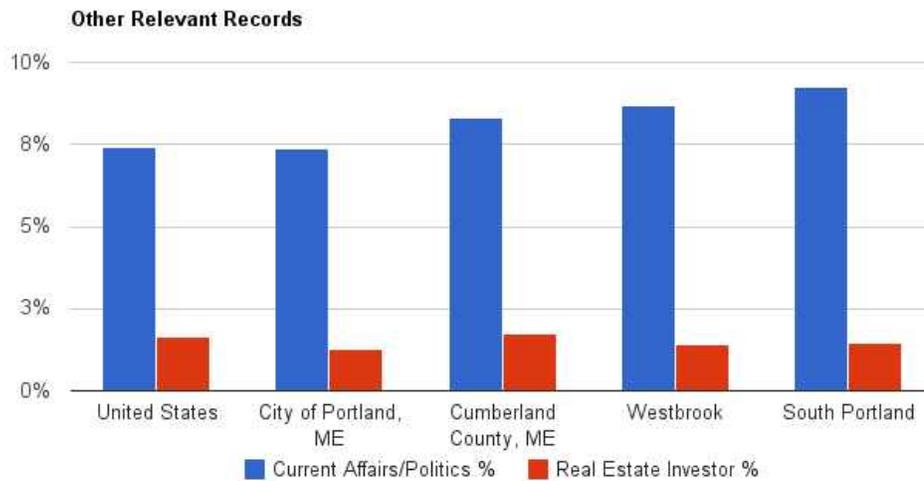
	Democrat #	Democrat %	Republican #	Republican %	Other/Unknown #	Other/Unknown %
United States	24,391,699	22%	15,057,841	13%	73,161,489	65%
City of Portland, ME	6,691	23%	1,372	5%	21,651	73%
Cumberland County, ME	31,106	27%	10,313	9%	72,723	64%
Westbrook	1,524	20%	412	5%	5,632	74%
South Portland	3,156	29%	884	8%	6,837	63%

### Political Party - Head of Household



## Other Relevant Audience Targeter Fields

	Current Affairs/Politics #	Current Affairs/Politics %	Real Estate Investor #	Real Estate Investor %
United States	22834938	7%	5053583	2%
City of Portland, ME	4643	7%	803	1%
Cumberland County, ME	23374	8%	4877	2%
Westbrook	1518	9%	247	1%
South Portland	2315	9%	369	1%

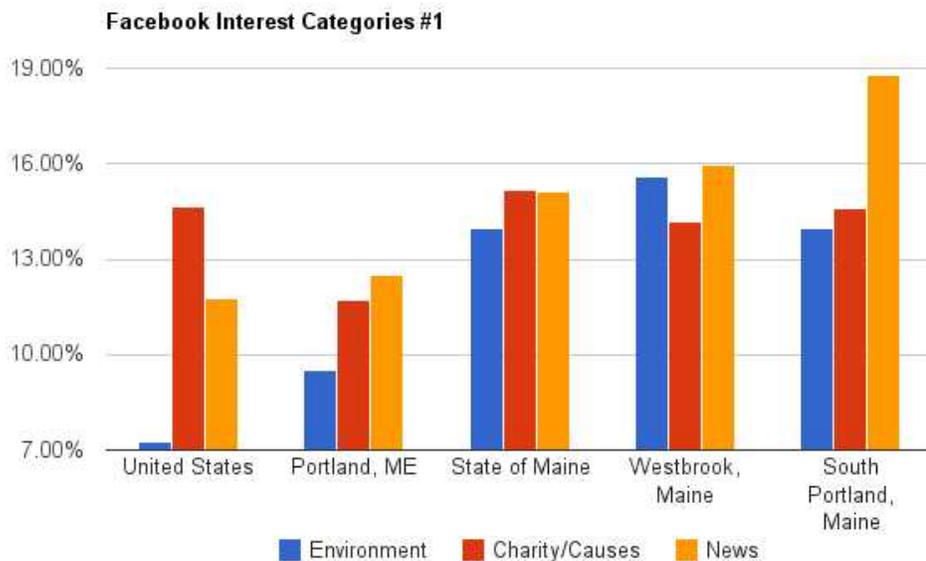


## Facebook Data

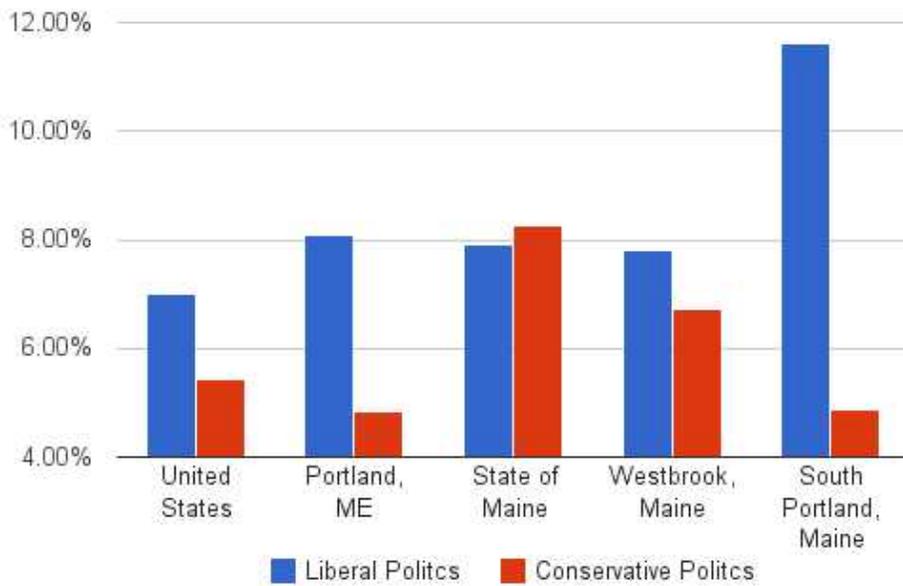
Jurisdiction	# of users	Charity/Causes	News	Conservative Politics	Liberal Politics	Environment
USA	154040460	22593180	18101440	8363800	10777480	11157720
Portland, ME	128940	15120	16120	6240	10420	12240
State of Maine	633220	96240	95680	52260	50000	88560
Westbrook, Maine	5640	800	900	380	440	880
South Portland, Maine	9460	1380	1780	460	1100	1320

Jurisdiction	Environment	Charity/Causes	News	Liberal Politics	Conservative Politics
United States	49%	80%	37%	49%	48%
Portland, ME	81%	107%	41%	81%	69%
State of Maine	92%	99%	54%	92%	52%
Westbrook, Maine	110%	113%	48%	110%	55%
South Portland, Maine	96%	129%	33%	96%	80%

These charts display the number of Facebook users flagged in each general category, divided by the total number of Facebook users in the jurisdiction.



**Facebook Interest Categories, #2**



## **ATTACHMENT 2: BUSINESSES BY SIC CODE**

## Business Community Profile and User Fee Implications - Portland, Maine

Division	Major Group	Industry Group	Code	Description	# of businesses in this SIC Division, Group, or Code in the City of Portland.
C: Construction	15: Building Construction General Contractors And Operative Builders			This major group includes general contractors and operative builders primarily engaged in the construction of residential, farm, industrial, commercial, or other buildings. General building contractors who combine a special trade with the contracting are included in this major group.	123
C: Construction	16: Heavy Construction Other Than Building Construction Contractors			This major group includes general contractors primarily engaged in heavy construction other than building, such as highways and streets, bridges, sewers, railroads, irrigation projects, flood control projects and marine construction, and special trade contractors primarily engaged in activities of a type that are clearly specialized to such heavy construction and are not normally performed on buildings or building-related projects. Specialized activities that are covered here include grading for highways and airport runways; guardrail construction; installation of highway signs; trenching; underwater rock removal; and asphalt and concrete construction of roads, highways, streets and public sidewalks. Establishments primarily engaged in specialized activities that may be performed on buildings or on other heavy construction projects are classified in Major Group 17. These include contractors primarily engaged in painting (including bridge painting and traffic lane painting), electrical work (including work on bridges, power lines, and power plants), and carpentry work.	17
D: Manufacturing	20-39			The manufacturing division includes establishments engaged in the mechanical or chemical transformation of materials or substances into new products. These establishments are usually described as plants, factories, or mills and characteristically use power driven machines and materials handling equipment. Establishments engaged in assembling component parts of manufactured products are also considered manufacturing if the new product is neither a structure nor other fixed improvement. Also included is the blending of materials, such as lubricating oils, plastics resins, or liquors.	228
E: Transportation, Communications, Electric, Gas, And Sanitary Services	42: Motor Freight Transportation And Warehousing	Group 422: Public Warehousing And Storage	4221-4226	This major group includes establishments engaged in the storage of farm products, furniture and other household goods, or commercial goods of any nature. The operation of terminal facilities for handling freight, with or without maintenance facilities, is also included.	50
E: Transportation, Communications, Electric, Gas, And Sanitary Services	41: Local And Suburban Transit And Interurban Highway Passenger Transportation	411: Local And Suburban Passenger Transportation	4111: Local and Suburban Transit	Establishments primarily engaged in furnishing local and suburban mass passenger transportation over regular routes and on regular schedules, with operations confined principally to a municipality, contiguous municipalities, or a municipality and its suburban areas. Also included in this industry are establishments primarily engaged in furnishing passenger transportation by automobile, bus, or rail to, from, or between airports or rail terminals, over regular routes, and those providing bus and rail commuter services.	6
G: Retail Trade	55: Automotive Dealers And Gasoline Service Stations	551: Motor Vehicle Dealers (new And Used)	Group 5511 + 5512	Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of new automobiles or new and used automobiles. These establishments frequently maintain repair departments and carry stocks of replacement parts, tires, batteries, and automotive accessories. These establishments also frequently sell pickups and vans at retail.	17
G: Retail Trade	58: Eating And Drinking Places	581: Eating and Drinking Places	5812 + 5813	This major group includes retail establishments selling prepared foods and drinks for consumption on the premises; and also lunch counters and refreshment stands selling prepared foods and drinks for immediate consumption. Restaurants, lunch counters, and drinking places operated as a subordinate service facility by other establishments are not included in this industry, unless they are operated as leased departments by outside operators. Thus, restaurants and lunch counters operated by hotels are classified in Services, Major Group 70; those operated by department stores in Major Group 53. Bars and restaurants owned by and operated for members of civic, social, and fraternal associations only are classified in Industry 8641. Mobile food and dairy wagons are classified in Industry 5963.	308
H: Finance, Insurance, And Real Estate	65: Real Estate	651: Real Estate Operators (except Developers) And Lessors	6513 Operators of Apartment Buildings	Establishments primarily engaged in the operation of apartment buildings. Apartment buildings are defined as containing five or more housing units. This industry does not include hotels, rooming and boarding houses, camps, and other lodging places for transients which are classified in Services, Major Group 70.	59
H: Finance, Insurance, And Real Estate	65: Real Estate	651: Real Estate Operators (except Developers) And Lessors	Group 6512 Operators of Nonresidential Buildings	Establishments primarily engaged in the operation of nonresidential buildings:  Bank buildings, operation of Insurance buildings, operation of Lessors of piers, docks, and associated buildings and facilities Operators of commercial and industrial buildings Operators of nonresidential buildings Retail establishments, property operation only Shopping centers, property operation only Theater buildings (ownership and operation)	74

## Business Community Profile and User Fee Implications - Portland, Maine

Division	Major Group	Industry Group	Code	Description	# of businesses in this SIC Division, Group, or Code in the City of Portland.
H: Finance, Insurance, And Real Estate	65: Real Estate	653: Real Estate Agents And Managers	Group 6531 Real Estate Agents and Managers	Establishments primarily engaged in renting, buying, selling, managing, and appraising real estate for others. Agents, real estate Appraisers, real estate Brokers of manufactured homes, on site Brokers, real estate Buying agents, real estate Cemetery management service Condominium managers Cooperative apartment manager Escrow agents, real estate Fiduciaries, real estate Housing authorities, operating Listing service, real estate Managers, real estate Multiple listing services, real estate Real estate auctions Rental agents for real estate Selling agents for real estate Time-sharing real estate: sales, leasing, and rentals	188
H: Finance, Insurance, And Real Estate	65: Real Estate	655: Land Subdividers And Developers	Group 6552 Land Subdividers and Developers, Except Cemeteries	Establishments primarily engaged in subdividing real property into lots, except cemetery lots, and in developing it for resale on their own account. Establishments primarily engaged in developing lots for others are classified in Industry 1794.	29
I: Services	80: Health Services	806: Hospitals	Group 8062: General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	Establishments primarily engaged in providing general medical and surgical services and other hospital services. Specialty hospitals are classified in Industries 8063 and 8069.	8
I: Services	70: Hotels, Rooming Houses, Camps, And Other Lodging Places	701: Hotels And Motels	Group 7011 Hotels and Motels	Commercial establishments, known to the public as hotels, motor hotels, motels, or tourist courts, primarily engaged in providing lodging, or lodging and meals, for the general public. Hotels which are operated by membership organizations and open to the general public are included in this industry. Hotels operated by organizations for their members only are classified in Industry 7041. Apartment hotels are classified in Real Estate, Industry 6513; rooming and boarding houses are classified in Industry 7021; and sporting and recreational camps are classified in Industry 7032.	37
I: Services	86: Membership Organizations	866: Religious Organizations	Group 8661 Religious Organizations	Establishments of religious organizations operated for worship, religious training or study, government or administration of an organized religion, or for promotion of religious activities. Other establishments maintained by religious organizations, such as educational institutions, hospitals, publishing houses, reading rooms, social services, and secondhand stores, are classified according to their primary activity. Also included in this industry are religious groups which reach the public through radio or television media. Establishments of such religious groups which produce taped religious programming for television are classified in Industry 7812, and those which produce live religious programs are classified in Industry 7922. Establishments of such groups which operate radio or television stations are classified in Communications, Major Group 48.  Churches Convents Monasteries Religious instruction, provided by religious organizations Religious organizations Shrines, religious Temples	83
I: Services	82: Educational Services	821: Elementary And Secondary Schools	Group 8211 Elementary and Secondary Schools	Elementary and secondary schools furnishing academic courses, ordinarily for kindergarten through grade 12. Included in this industry are parochial schools and military academies furnishing academic courses for kindergarten through grade 12, and secondary schools which furnish both academic and technical courses.	45
I: Services	75: Automotive Repair, Services, And Parking	752: Automobile Parking	Group 7521: Automobile Parking	Establishments primarily engaged in the temporary parking of automobiles, usually on an hourly, daily, or monthly contract or fee basis. Establishments primarily engaged in extended or dead storage of automobiles are classified in Transportation, Industry 4226.  Garages, automobile parking Parking lots Parking structures Tow-in parking lots	15
<b>Total:</b>					<b>1287</b>

Source: Water Words That Work LLC Audience Targeter: <http://waterwords.usadata.com/>

Sewer and Stormwater Fee Data based on City of Portland preliminary impact analysis under a tiered impervious fee billing (2011)

## **ATTACHMENT 3: DUE DILIGENCE TEST PANEL RESULTS**



## Memorandum

To: Zachary Henderson, Woodard & Curran

From: Eric Eckl

Re: Due Diligence Test Panel Feedback on "Water... Our Gift, Our Challenge, Our Responsibility."

Date: 9/12/2011

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Here are the panelists' scores and comments on the "Water... Our Gift, Our Challenge, Our Responsibility" piece describing a forthcoming stormwater utility in Toledo, Ohio. The piece is appended to this report.

This piece earned the overall highest marks of any tested in this batch:

- Almost 86% agree that the utility would "make a positive difference for the community."
- 74% agree "the piece has a clear message"
- Over 90% agree that "the issue is important to society" and "it is urgent to address this issue now."

Of note, the piece is very effective at convincing readers that "the government will spend the money wisely." About 2/3 of panelists agreed with that -- much higher than the Suffolk, VA (39%) or Morgantown, WV (52%) pieces.

The marks are not quite as strong for photography:

- 70% agree "the images help me understand the problem."
- 61.4% agree "the images help me understand how my money would be used"

*Note: All panelists' comments are provided verbatim, including spelling, grammar, and typos.*

## Overall Impressions

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1. In your own words, describe the social issue or problem the piece is about:

- The piece seems to imply rather effectively that the residents need to help finance the improvements & security precautions to their water system.
- This is a piece describing a flooding problem as a result of inadequate storm water construction in Toledo.

- It is about how water and the sewer system doesn't drain properly which leads to flooding.
- Toledo is prone to flooding. Government officials want to raise taxes to cover the problem.
- Toledo has a problem with storm water runoff that can be alleviated by construction of improvement projects. The proposal is to fund these improvements by adding a set amount to monthly utility bills.
- Water is a basic need. Storm water drain off is a major problem since it was built on a swamp. Storm water drain off picks up and carries pollutants that ultimately wind up in Lake Erie which can threaten the local water supply.
- The town is built on a swamp and drains poorly because of such and therefore floods, and pollutes storm water.
- Excess water management for the city of Toledo to avoid floods and control waterways that the city is wanting to impose a fee to property owners to help pay for the new planned program.
- Trying to get people to pay for the problem with the water.
- Toledo's plan to deal with excess storm water runoff.
- Poor city management and funds needed to maintain disaster areas after a flood.
- The cost of living in Toledo due to water issues and rates of costs to supply clean and better water for the public along with tax dollars to pay for the costs to keep up on it.
- City of Toledo needs to update its storm water management system. It is a costly venture, and this article outlines why it needs to be done, the costs involved and how residents will be charged for this project.
- Water conservation in the 'blessed' city of Toledo. They are trying to preserve cleanliness.
- Too much water in Toledo. They'd like to help with this problem.
- The piece is about people paying to prevent water flooring.
- The piece is about a new Storm Water Utility, why it's needed, and the costs for people in the community.
- It's about how much flooding there is in and around Toledo and how there is a need for more help in dealing with it and making sure it's not full of pollution when it enters the rivers and streams and Lake Erie.
- There is a major drainage problem in the city of Toledo. The local government proposes a drainage solution that would be paid for by local residents in the form of a monthly tax.
- Toledo's water system that may cause flooding needs to be upgraded.
- This piece was about the problem facing the city of Toledo with water run off and drainage, and flooding problems; and how to address these problems to provide improvements to the drainage systems.
- The piece is about a new tax that will be introduced to Toledo in order to fund the cost of new flood/drainage/storm water measures
- The problem is the risk of flooding when there are storms because the area the city is on is swampland so the water doesn't drain well so increases flooding.
- Stormwater management in Toledo.

- The problem is that Toledo--which was built on a swamp--has problems with flooding due to excessive run-off from spring rains.
- They are discussing the problem of flooding happening because of too much storm water, and it poses an environmental threat.

2. In your own words, how does the local government or water utility plan to solve this issue or problem?

- They plan on asking for a set rate hike to help pay for improvement, engineering, research and other means to make Toledo's water system not only healthy but more sustainable in the future.
- They're trying to implement a program to work on storm water infrastructure.
- They want to raise funds to help redesign and improve the existing system.
- By putting in new drains and taxing the people in the city.
- The local government was to upgrade the present system of ditches and drainage with locally funded construction projects.
- The plan is to add a monthly usage fee based on their calculated ERU. This would be \$3.16/mo for commercial users. The estimated annual revenue would be \$9-12 million. While ditch improvements alone need \$150 million, this would be a start in funding the repair and upgrading of the drainage infrastructure in Toledo.
- By giving a small tax to all residents and commercial properties based on their total "hard area".
- Which this will then be used to fund a storm water system for drainage.
- They plan on taking the funding they raise from the fees put on property owners and building a new infrastructure to control the excess water.
- making people pay a fee to have it fixed.
- By building new storm sewer channels and better maintaining the existing storm sewer infrastructure.
- they are charging a 3.00 fee per month for maintenance and repair of flood waters.
- The government and community officials plan to use a quarter of the money that is collected from each individual living in Toledo; on their property/water bills, etc, towards upgrade on engineering and planning and solutions towards storm water issues. I don't think anything was clear, cut, and presented firmly from the ad/document I read.
- Charging a rate based on ERUs, or Equivalent Resident Units, which is essentially based on hard surface area (where water cannot be absorbed). People that contribute with more run off will pay more than those that have less.
- They are going to regulate cleaner waters through proper storm drain systems and other healthier methods.
- They will build something to help the storm runoff.
- They plan to charge taxpayers through utility bills for a better system.
- It will better manage the storm water to prevent flooding.
- they are going to charge people a certain amount based on where they live, and it will show up as a charge on the property tax bills.
- They propose to build a storm water collection system that will allow storm water that has collected on concrete & other surfaces to be funneled into natural water systems.

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- They are going to upgrade the system, with more ditches and such.
- The local government plans to solve this problem with the new Storm Water Utility program, which will charge a fee of about \$3.16 per month to residents and commercial residents. This money will then be used for improvements and repairs.
- They plan to make improvements to existing ditches, the plan to use the same storm water model as cities in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. They plan to fund preventative maintenance as this is not something they have funding for currently.
- They plan on charging a monthly fee on their water and sewer bill for the maintenance and repair and improvements of the city's storm water system.
- Maintain and improve storm water system (sewers, pipes, etc).
- The city plans to solve the problem by improving the outdated infrastructure that deals with storm water run-off, such as fixing ditches and making other improvements.
- By charging a monthly fee to put a new plan into actions that will redirect the water to lake Erie.

3. In your own words, how does the local government or water utility want to pay for its work on this issue or problem?

- They are proposing a rate increase per homeowner/business of \$3.16 each for not only the residents of the city Of Toledo, Ohio but any other surrounding community that uses their system.
- They are charging approximately \$3.16 per month for homes, and \$3.16x(amount of similarly sized non-residential units) for commercial customers.
- My charging 3.16 for single family residents. Or 3.16 per 2500 per square foot of hard surface area.
- By raising taxes.
- The government plans to add a set amount to monthly utility bills. Individual residents will pay a set amount, and businesses will pay an amount based on equivalent residential units.
- Funds would come from usage fees charged to property owners. The amount is based on a calculated ERU. The ERU is based on a properties blacktop and driveway coverage as well as the surface area of roofs.
- By giving a small tax to all residents and commercial properties based on there total "hard area".
- Which this will then be used to fund a storm water system for drainage.
- They will pay for it by instilling a fee on your water and sewer bills.
- Charging people a monthly or quarterly fee.
- The city will tax residents and business by the month.
- half the money goes to the actual cost of operations and maintenance, 25% to projects of infrastructure and 25% to planning and regulation costs
- Through the home owners and the amount of property of land you live upon.
- It is asking for taxpayers to foot the bill and the fee will appear on their water utility bill.
- A taxation for this project would be inevitable.
- They will charge the people who pay for water. It will be about \$3 extra per month.
- They plan to charge tax payers through utility bills.

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- Toledoans will be charged a fee based on the amount of contribution to storm water runoff.
- They want to pay for it through a tax of property owners.
- The local government proposes a tax upon property owners of about \$3.16 per month.
- Get money from all the home owners to upgrade the water system via a new tax.
- They will pay for the work with the Storm Water Utility, a tax on the residents of about \$3.16 per month to go towards repairs.
- It wants homeowners to pay per square feet of hard surface area and commercial properties a flat rate.
- They plan on charging a monthly fee.
- They plan to collect a fee from property owners based on how much they are contributing to the problem.
- They plan to add a fee to residents' water bills that amounts to \$3.16 per ERU. These ERUs are calculated based on the square footage of hard surfaces on residential properties.
- If you own property they want to charge you a small tax every month that will pay for this project.
- The tax would be very small and you probably wouldn't even notice it.

## Program Impressions

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The government will collect the money fairly	3.7 %	7.4 %	14.8 %	37.0 %	37.0 %
The government will spend the money wisely	7.4 %	3.7 %	22.2 %	33.3 %	33.3 %
This program will make a positive difference for the community	0.0 %	0.0 %	14.8 %	29.6 %	55.5 %

In your own words, please elaborate on your answer to the last statement about "making a difference."

- The city & surrounding communities that use this water system will see vast improvements in waste disposal, the cleanliness & purity of their drinking water & reduced contaminants that could adversely affect those in these areas in a wide variety of negative ways.
- Flooding is not only dangerous, but it is costly as well. Infrastructure improvements will benefit the community by sustaining jobs, decreasing property damage/loss as a result of storms, and maintaining safety.
- By improving the system it will help reduce flooding thus reduce the cost of repair of damage cause by flooding. It will also help keep roads clear and reduce damage to cars caused by floods.
- I think it would help the community. There are not enough funds to pay for it.
- The project will alleviate the threat of flooding from storm water. The project will also provide local jobs during construction.
- Good water quality is a basic need for humans. Currently, there is excessive storm water runoff in Toledo. As water runoff occurs, it picks up debris and pollutants that eventually make their way to Lake Erie. Since Lake Erie is a major water supply for Toledo, keeping the water clean will make a difference for it's citizens.
- I was neutral on the last two issues because government can say they will do amazing things with funding and then blow millions and get nothing done such as the current situation with the nations debt for example.
- By controlling the excess water it will help communities to not flood thereby reducing the need for further government support and possibly lowering the insurance for areas that are subject to flooding.
- Well fixing the issues would help but alot of people already have so many bills that adding fees may bot be helpful.

- It is important to homeowners and business to lessen the risks of flooding.
- not enough of the funds will go to the project they are taxing you on, however... anything is better than nothing, so in this case, I am for it, for the townships sake.
- I do not feel this will make much of a difference until solid proof and facts are stated with statistics of whether this really is a solution or not.
- Having watched epic disasters over the years with flooding across this country, Federal Emergency Funding is quickly getting tapped out. Because these events tend to keep happening in the same areas (Toledo described 100 yr old problem), it seems like the responsible thing to do for people who want to continue to live in that are, is for them to step up and work towards really SOLVING the problem. This will make a difference for this community longer term with financial savings, loss of property damage, loss of lives, agriculture, etc.
- Water, as we are all composed of it, should be as clean as possible for any community.
- It will help the community to not flood.
- It will help stop flooding.
- If there is a problem with storm water and flooding, this will help manage the problem, though they do not really give concrete examples of planned projects.
- Keeping the sewer drains clean and free of harmful debris is important, and hopefully this money that they are going to receive will be used right.
- If implemented correctly, this system will prevent flooding, improve the local water table, and create jobs.
- Well they are certainly going to charge everybody more and dig up a bunch of land, whether the residents will see an improvement remains to be seen.
- If the money is used for the improvements and repairs as it should be, then water run off and flooding should be less of a problem, which would make a positive difference in the community as there would be less damage to property, crops, etc.
- I believe that better flood prevention will increase property prices and encourage new business and families to move to the area, thus improving local economy.
- It will help the city improve the storm water system.
- This will help the community by reducing flooding and improving water quality.
- The updates to infrastructure will prevent flooding and property damage, which will have definite positive impacts for the community.
- it could save my house from flooding, I live in a high risk area.

## Find Foolproof Photos

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The images get my attention	<u>7.4 %</u>	<u>18.5 %</u>	<u>22.2 %</u>	<u>29.6 %</u>	<u>22.2 %</u>
The images help me understand the problem	<u>11.1 %</u>	<u>11.1 %</u>	<u>7.4 %</u>	<u>44.4 %</u>	<u>25.9 %</u>
The images help me understand how my money will be used	<u>7.6 %</u>	<u>15.3 %</u>	<u>15.3 %</u>	<u>38.4 %</u>	<u>23.0 %</u>

In your own words, please elaborate on your thoughts about the images in this piece:

- I thought the images conveyed the message in this piece, and basically helped tell & support the piece.
- I tend to be a numbers person. I did appreciate the blurb bubbles that singled out important facts.
- The images were OK. They are necessary for people that are not used to flooding.
- The images show that there is a flooding issue.
- I thought the images were well done. The overall blue tone made it easy to see details.
- The images all relate to the content of the piece. The first one shows Toledo as a clean city. The second one illustrates how storm water works its way to Lake Erie. The fourth is a chart that simplifies the calculation of ERU's and the fourth illustrates that flooding is an ongoing problem in Toledo.
- They really didn't get my attention except for the box with the equation for calculating ERU.
- Of course showing the infrastructure helps the average person see what is truly going on with the dismissal of excess water along with showing how it can get out of control when there are no other alternatives.
- They didn't really interest me.
- The odd color pallet of the picture makes them fade into the background.
- devastation pictures are not very effective, strong words are. we are bombarded with disaster everyday via news and media, this is tame by comparison.
- I think the images should be more realistic and have more color to explain the situation and plans more.
- Felt like I've seen them a 100x on the news over the years, and only the name of the city changes. It could be just about anywhere in the midwest or the south.
- It was a standard, generic image for informative use.
- Very good detailed pictures.
- The images could be misleading. I think they are there to sway the ntax payers.

- The images explain the problems, but not the solutions.
- that picture is of an old museum ship and there are no boats out on the river at all, it's not a very good picture, in my opinion, it makes Toledo look deader than it actually is, not that it's all that lively, and the little drawing of the house and street and sewer is pretty lame.
- The images need more explanation.
- The images in the piece are very good.
- The image that showed how the water runoff is a problem is very informative and helps to explain the issue. The picture showing the flooding around the house helps to show why this is a big problem.
- They are not really adding anything that the text doesn't. I like the first image, the second image/diagram i feel needs to be more colorful to attract people to read it more, especially helping those with reading difficulties. I like the 3rd image, it shows the damage caused by flooding, but the diagram to the left seems overly complex to and i feel needs to be simplified to enable the majority to understand.
- The images help me to understand and put it all together.
- To be honest, I barely noticed them when I was reading; they are in such muted colors.
- I think the illustration is helpful for understanding how the system works, and the flood image demonstrates the severity of the problem.
- very good images get the point across.

## Swap the Shoptalk

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The piece has a clear message	0.0 %	3.7 %	0.0 %	22.2 %	74.0 %
I could explain this piece to others without showing it to them	0.0 %	3.7 %	11.1 %	37.0 %	48.1 %
The piece was prepared with the general public in mind	0.0 %	0.0 %	7.4 %	33.3 %	59.2 %

In your own words, how would you describe the audience this piece is intended for?

- I would say this piece was very fair & unbiased. It explained the present issues with the system, the rate hikes in detail & where they would be spent and how this would positively impact that area.
- Regular citizens, but primarily homeowners.
- The entire population of Toledo so that they have a better understanding of the importance of fixing the problem.
- The audience this piece is intended for is the tax payers that will be paying for the project.
- The intended audience is citizens of Toledo who are being asked to fund this project.
- It is intended for the average citizen but with some emphasis towards the commercial property owners.
- Residents and business owners of Toledo.
- Putting the proposal in simple laymen's terms for the general public to understand the need for the changes.
- Informing the people who live in the situation of what would be happening and informing others of what these people who live there are going through.
- As information for homeowners and businesses.
- Toledo is built on a swamp and water does not drain well because of the abundant lakes. we need need water passageways and infrastructure.. 3.00 a month is a small price to pay to ensure a safe city to live.
- the public, the community, the tax payer.
- Seems like it was intended for folks higher up the government chain, like maybe this was part of a presentation they made to the EPA as to their water management plan, but also intended for the Toledo population to explain upcoming changes.
- It was clear and straight forward to any audience.
- The local people of Toledo.
- The local community residents and business owners.

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- The audience for this piece is the general public in Toledo that will be charged for the new Storm Water Utility.
- It is for an audience of taxpaying Toledo area residents who need to know why they are going to be getting an extra charge on their property taxes.
- This piece was intended for the land-owning public of the city of Toledo.
- The people of Toledo who are now going to be scared into paying more taxes to the government.
- This piece is intended for the residents and commercial building owners of the city of Toledo who would be paying this tax.
- Homeowners/residents/business owners of Toledo. I feel this would be something that arrived in the mail and my concern if this delivery method is used that many may not read it.
- The audience is the people who live in the city and shows them what they want to do.
- Property owners in Toledo.
- I would say the audience would be the average homeowner, although MAYBE a demographic that is more educated than average.
- the piece was easy to understand. i think it is for everyone. Meaning all could understand it.

## Insert the Words That Work

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The issue is important to society	3.7 %	3.7 %	0.0 %	44.4 %	48.1 %
It is urgent to address this issue now	7.4 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	44.4 %	48.1 %
Issues like this affect me or my family	7.6 %	11.5 %	11.5 %	23.0 %	46.1 %

In your own words, please elaborate on your answer to the last statement, "issues like this affect me or my family."

- Clean water is not only important to me & my family insofar as the health concerns but to our environment & eco-cycle. Measures like this not only help us, it helps the life in & around the water that is affected by negative contaminants & neglect.
- I live in a flood-prone area and \*wish\* our politicians actually did things to improve the area's infrastructure.
- Where I live Whenever it rain even just a little bit the roads flood. There have been a few nights when I have gotten off of work and haven't been able to make it home because of the poor design of the drainage system.
- There could be a time when taxes are raised in my city for some reason or another.
- I currently pay a fee just as proposed for Toledo. It's been on my monthly utility bill for several years now and is a relatively painless way to fund such projects.
- My water supply is from deep artesian wells and drainage management is not a major problem in my community.
- This issue covers water which is essential to life and fresh water is a resource that must be managed effectively.
- Well, if I was in an area that flooded constantly when it rained alot then this would have a great bearing on me, let alone it would help my insurance to have something done in the community in which should help lower that cost.
- If I was putting myself in the situation it would affect me and my family financially to be paying for another bill.
- We had flooding in my area in the past.
- I would NEVER live in such a city that was destined for serious devastation.
- Where I live this does not affect me, but there are several places in the US where it does and needs to be taken care of. Action must be taken.
- Well, when the "big one" happens in S. California (earthquake), and there is no Federal Assistance available to people like me because of all the weather/storm/flooding issues

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across the U.S., I would be rather upset that we weren't taking more steps to better manage problems & longer term solutions to them. These things KEEP happening, so our responses to them must change. It does affect me/my family and everyone else in this country be it in the form of taxes, lack of emergency funds, etc.

- There was a sense of urgency. The issue is important from what was read.
- There are several different similar issues that could happen in any city or town and I would appreciate the local government looking for a solution.
- I would like and place my family and I could go to be safe and clean. Also my community may want to adopt this idea.
- Our area (NOT TOLEDO) recently experienced significant flooding, but without a region-wide stormwater management program, we're really just left to rebuild without much attention towards how it will be managed in the future.
- I just got something in the mail about this the other day. It affects me because this is the area where I live, and when we had some heavy rains and the river flooded, you could see a ton of debris floating in it. Pollution around here is a serious issue, and as they put up more houses, it only gets worse.
- The quality of our water systems affect everyone's health and environment. Also, persistent flooding affects the community's quality of life.
- This issue does not really apply to me or my family because we don't live in a swamp.
- If the flooding is as bad as it is shown in the picture with the house, then this issue would effect myself and other family/friends. Flooding would ruin our property, our belongings, our home, etc.
- Issues like this affect everybody, even if you don't live in a flood plain. Your road to work could be flooded - causing loss of income, businesses may move away if they are repeatedly flooded causing the towns economy to decrease and house prices of the whole area and cause loss of jobs, not just the flood plain to decrease.
- This particular issues don't affect me since i don't live in an area with problems like flooding.
- I do not own property, but I am still affected by flooding/pollution.
- As municipal water users, we would be affected by the new fees, but would also benefit from the solutions to the current problems. Besides that, the flooding can affect my family.
- I live in a high risk flooding area. I would be willing to pay a small tax to save my house and family.

## Parting Thoughts

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In your own words, please share any parting thoughts you have for the organization that produced this piece. Remember, your identity is confidential.

- I believe this piece is taking a step in the right direction, with the community & the people in mind first & foremost. I also believe all communities should use this piece as

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an example to make sure they are both providing safe clean water & keeping the environment safe & clean.

- Very accessible language. You'll get your point across well.
- I think the folder is well done, easy to understand, easy on the eyes. Good layout.
- I feel that the issue of water quality is important, so I feel the piece highlights a genuine problem and presents a realistic start to working on the drainage management issues.
- I liked how it was presented.
- I am concerned about the cost being a hardship to low income homeowners.
- this city, and area of the country is in horrible shape.. cities are failing left and right because of mismanaged funds. 3.00 a month will not break the bank, but it is an example of misguided funds as a whole. the citizens should come together, but i'm afraid too little will actually serve its real propose.
- I think the article and document need a more clear, cut, and simple explanation with better verbal facts.
- No other thoughts, shared them already in these questions.
- Toledo is a city in dire need of rehabilitation. Good water is a great start.
- I think this is a great idea. It seems well researched.
- I think it should show statistics.
- I think it's a good piece, but I think providing solid examples of what the plans are, and how they will fix the stormwater flooding in the future, and how it will save money in the long run (repairs, road crews, etc.) would be useful.
- Find a better picture to put up.
- I think this is potentially a great idea, as long as the funds are managed correctly and effectively.
- Sounds like more government programs to nickel and dime us to death!
- I like this piece, it was an interesting read. It is kind of shocking that people would disagree with it considering the tax is so low - pocket change one might say. One comment I do have though, is that I feel that the tax rate for business is too low, especially if homeowners are paying per sq feet of hard surface. Typically businesses cover more areas in hard surfaces so I feel this is unfair.
- I would not want to live in an area that has such a high risk of flooding because then your home and everything you have can be lost in one nasty storm.
- Very nice leaflet. I thought it was clear and fair.
- None.

## **About the Due Diligence Test Panel**

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Just whose opinions are these, anyway? The "Due Diligence Test Panel" is a standing body of U.S. residents who provide feedback on marketing materials and perform related tasks in return for payment.

A major corporation recruits the board members, maintains the feedback system, and acts as a financial middleman. Water Words That Work, LLC has devised this questionnaire and subscribes to the service, as do other marketing firms.

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The feedback that you receive from the test panel is free of the biases that skew the feedback you get from your peers:

- Test panel members have the perspective of taxpayers and voters "in the wild." They are not professionals in the field.
- Test panel members have not participated in the drafting of the materials.
- Test panel members' feedback is not influenced by their personal relationship with you.
- The test panel more closely approximates the demographic makeup of U.S. taxpayers and voters than the staff of your organization.

Demographic Trait	Environmental Professionals	Due Diligence Test Panel	Traditional Telephone Poll, U.S. Sample	Actual U.S. (Census)
4 Year College Degree	95% or higher	~50%	~40%	27%
White/Caucasian	95% or higher	~80%	~80%	64%

# **Water...Our gift**

## **Our challenge**

### **Our responsibility**

#### **Toledo's Storm Water Utility**

The City of Toledo is blessed with an abundant water supply. Our rivers, streams and Lake Erie are enjoyed by area residents and are essential to our region's prosperity.

You can have too much of a good thing. Toledo was built on a swamp and that means our area doesn't drain well. Much of Toledo is plagued by flooding during heavy rains or spring thaws.

Storm water related flooding poses a threat to residents and property. And it poses a significant environmental threat to area waterways as well.

Storm water management is one of the major challenges facing Toledo today. To address this problem, city leaders have created a new Storm Water Utility. The goal of the utility is reducing flooding, improving the drainage of storm water, and improving the water quality of local rivers and streams.

Under the new utility, property owners will be charged a monthly fee on their water and sewer bill for the maintenance, repair and improvement of the city's storm water system.



## Flooding and Pollution

Flooding has been a persistent problem in Toledo for over a century. In more recent times, as population grew, development of farmland caused further storm drainage problems, this time in neighborhoods and on local streets.

In addition to property damage, flooding poses a threat to public health and safety. And property values often decrease in areas that flood frequently. Poor storm drainage also causes water pollution. Storm water picks up a lot of things on its way to area streams and Lake Erie – litter, road salt, lawn and garden chemicals and more. Backyard mechanics that drain oil, antifreeze or gas into the storm sewer pose a threat to water quality. Even washing the car can direct unwanted chemicals into area waterways.

That's one of the reasons tough, new U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulations require the City to act to improve storm water management.

## Toledo's Storm Water System

To understand the challenge facing the city, it is important to know how the storm water system in Toledo works. When it rains, some water is absorbed into the ground, the rest flows into storm sewers and ditches that direct the water to local streams and rivers and ultimately, Lake Erie.

Toledo's storm water system consists of:

- More than 1,000 miles of storm sewers
- 110 miles of ditches
- 50,000 manholes, catch basins, and curb inlets.

## The Need

Until the creation of the Storm Water Utility, the City of Toledo had no dedicated source of funding for storm water construction, maintenance and repair. The budget only allowed for emergency repairs. It did not fund preventive maintenance, major improvements or the enforcement of EPA regulations.

A 1971 comprehensive ditch study updated in 1984 and adjusted for inflation estimates \$150 million in improvements are needed for ditches alone. Clearly, additional, dedicated funding is needed to address storm water issues in the City of Toledo.

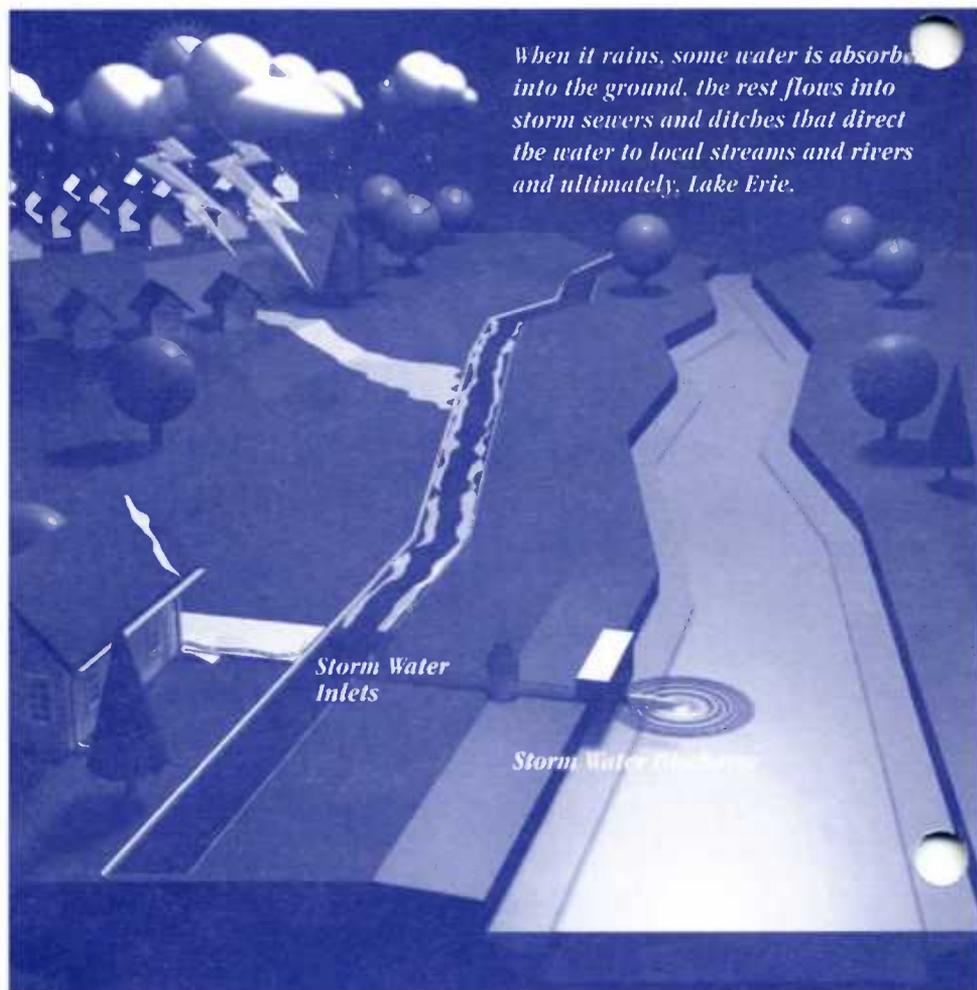
## The Storm Water Utility

The City of Toledo has adopted a Storm Water Utility model that has been used in more than 200 cities nationwide, including Columbus, Ohio; Fort Wayne, Indiana; and Louisville/Jefferson County, Kentucky. It provides a fair, equitable system of funding for this needed service.

## Costs for Home Owners

Under the model, all property owners in Toledo are charged a user fee based on the amount of contribution they make to storm water runoff.

All single-family residences are charged a daily rate totaling approximately \$3.16 per month or about \$9.48 each quarter for the maintenance, repair and improvement of



All single-family residences are charged a daily rate totaling approximately \$3.16 per month or about \$9.48 each quarter

the city's storm water system. The storm sewer charge appears on a customer's water and sewer bill.

The funding approach for homeowners is based on the average amount of hard surfaces, such as parking lots, driveways and roofs, found on residential properties in Toledo.

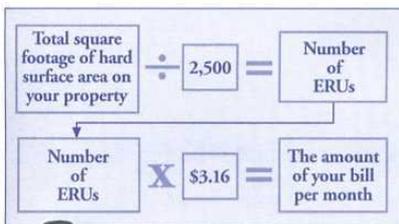
Why hard surfaces? Because they prevent water from being absorbed into the ground, hard surfaces create more runoff and increase the rate at which water drains from an area.

### Costs for Non-Residential Property Owners

The flat residential rate equals one "equivalent residential unit" or "ERU" and is used to calculate the fees for non-residential properties. One ERU equals 2,500 square feet of hard surface area – the average amount of hard surface areas such as driveways and roofs, found on residential properties in Toledo.

All commercial customers are being charged \$3.16 per month per ERU.

The following calculation is used to calculate non-residential bills:



### Credits Program

Non-residential property owners may apply for and earn credits for

independent actions they take to lessen storm water runoff or improve water quality. To qualify for credits you must complete an application and submit site plans prepared by a certified engineer. For more information on the credits program or to receive an application, call Customer Service, City of Toledo Department of Public Utilities at 245-1800.

### Use of Funds

It is estimated that a monthly fee of \$3.16 per ERU will raise between \$9-\$12 million a year in revenue. About half of the funds will be used for operations and maintenance of the current system.

A quarter of the funds will be available for capital projects – the actual construction of storm sewer infrastructure. The remainder will go for engineering and planning, and regulation/enforcement expenses.

Faced with a storm water system which needs an estimated \$150 million in ditch improvements alone,

it is clear that even with a \$3.16 per ERU monthly fee, the Storm Water Utility is not a quick fix. It is, however, a first step in overcoming a serious problem in the city of Toledo.

### Community Input

To establish a fair, equitable system that met the needs of the community, citizen involvement was vital. The City of Toledo formed a Storm Water Utility Advisory Committee (SWUAC) to provide input on the formation of the Storm Water Utility. The committee was made up of a dozen people representing homeowners, seniors, the business community, area churches, schools, realtors, environmental groups, City Council and the administration. The members provided input to ensure the system is fair and that it meets the needs of the community.

### For More Information

Answers to frequently asked questions about the new storm water charge are on the back of this brochure. For more information, you may call customer service at 245-1800.





## Memorandum

To: Zachary Henderson, Woodard & Curran

From: Eric Eckl

Re: Due Diligence Test Panel Feedback on Suffolk, Virginia's "Stormwater Utility FAQs"

Date: 9/12/2011

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Here are the panelists' scores and comments on the Suffolk, Virginia's "Stormwater Utility Frequently Asked Questions." The piece is appended to this report.

Something about the wording of this piece triggers concerns among the panelists about whether the money will be used as promised. Only 39% agree "the government will spend the money wisely."

In their own words, they express doubts such as:

- It will only make a positive difference in the community if the funds are used as they claim they would be used.
- I don't trust the government at all when it comes to allocating funds properly. and because of their mismanagement the fees will eventually have to go up.
- I think as long as the government does exactly what they say they will with this money it will have a positive impact on the quality of water we have.

Panelists give the piece pretty good scores on clarity and ease of reading, but many report that the language is dry and bureaucratic:

- It could be for the general citizenry, but it almost seems like it is meant to convince lawmakers.
- I think the audience would be more for the city council than it would be for the public. I think if it were intended more for the public it would have described the benefits to the public in much more detail.
- I would say either city council members or voters. maybe even the residents themselves.

*Note: All panelists' comments are provided verbatim, including spelling, grammar, and typos.*

## Overall Impressions

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1. In your own words, describe the social issue or problem the piece is about:

- Reducing pollution in the water supply.
- The creation of a government organization to handle the water and flooding from storms.
- The issue is storm water runoff, and because people litter, don't pick up after their pets, and because people use chemicals, and there's general bacteria in the storm water runoff, it goes into our lakes, streams and the like
- They need to make the storm water fee higher to make necessary upgrade to their system because of new government regulations.
- There is a problem locally as a result of water runoff that causes all kinds of problems including pollution, bacteria, flooding.
- The social issue at hand is Storm Water Utilities that excess storm water to flow into lakes/rivers (local), sounds like they are trying to lower/eliminate pollution/litter.
- The city of Suffolk wants to assess a fee to make Improvements to storm water runoff facilities to comply with the Clean Water Act. Some may feel the fee is another way to get money out of them.
- There are no government or state programs that cover fees for storm water drainage maintenance, so there is not enough funding.
- The problem is about storm water runoff.
- This is about helping to maintain the storm sewers and the pollution issues that accompany them.
- The problem is that contaminated water is affecting the Suffolk area, and could contaminate things like drinking water or areas where people swim.
- The issue described in the piece talks about storm water runoff and what is the best way to combat this problem and make the community safer to live in.
- Increase in property taxes (homeowners/businesses) to accumulate monies for public works.
- In order to clean up streams, rivers, lakes and other bodies of water Suffolk county is trying to raise fees (ERU's) to reduce the amount of pollution, bacteria and toxic chemicals that make their way in to the water supply.
- the storm water utility is a fee that is charged to individual homes and business that have run off. the revenue goes toward operation, management, construction and maintenance of storm water facilities.
- The piece describes raising funds to cover Storm Water runoff projects.
- Creating a fee to improve storm drains, and street cleaning.
- Storm water runoff results from rainfall. There are government regulations to deal with runoff.
- The government has to finance a storm water runoff department and is attempting to collect a fee from all businesses and homes to pay for it.
- Clean water from runoff and drainage systems in the city needs to be cleaner.
- The issue is trying to conserve water from rain water.
- It is about charges related to rainwater.
- Charging a fee for handling storm water runoff.
- waste water treatment.

- Storm run off carries off water from the city to prevent flooding. This water can carry pollution.

2. In your own words, how does the local government or water utility plan to solve this issue or problem?

- It will levy a fee for each developed property and use the money for inspection, education and any infrastructure added.
- They will upgrade drainage systems and remove certain types of waste.
- They plan to solve this issue by charging a fee based on based on the acreage of randomly selected homes in different areas, and charging each person who lives there certain amount based on that average. The money will then go toward helping the officials do more about a problem that the government allegedly does not have the money for.
- Raise the storm water fee to have the necessary money to make upgrade to their system.
- they will add more street cleaning and preventative services infrastructure related that will manage the problem.
- By charging a fee to pay for environmental education, street sweeping etc. to minimize the amount of litter etc. in the storm water as well as increase flow of the excess water to prevent flooding.
- By improving and maintaining water run off facilities. Such as maintenance of drains and increasing street sweeping.
- They plan to solve the problem by charging fees to each resident each month.
- Collect a fee to be used to maintain upkeep on storm water structures and for educational programs.  
make improvements to the system, do ditch and stream cleaning, do street cleaning, to help keep pollution like litter from entering the storm drains.
- They plan to solve the problem by the people paying the fees to hire people to contain the problem.
- The local government wants to issue a tax on property owners that would help pay to educate the public while also make improvements to the drain systems in order to keep the harmful bacteria to a minimum.
- By increasing property taxes.
- They will clean up waste products, such as animal feces, litter, pollution that has seeped into the soil to keep it from running into the water supply.
- by having the public works department handle this situation.
- The government is adding a fee onto the real estate tax for each developed property in order to maintain storm drains, street sweeping, etc.
- by adding on a storm water fee on to residents utility bills.
- They plan on charging a fee to improve their programs.
- The local government wants to charge a fee to all homes and businesses to finance a department that oversees storm water runoff in the city.
- charges a fee or tax to cover the cost of cleaning the water runoff and drainage.
- By charging a storm fee on person's property where there is a home or building.

- They want to collect it and dump in various lakes, rivers, and something called the Great Dismal Swamp. They also want to educate the public.
- They are building, updating, and maintaining drainage facilities. Additionally they need to fund occasional inspections and control erosion as well as sediment.
- to make runoff water cleaner and more efficient.
- The city builds and maintains storm drains to get the water out of the city quickly so it doesn't flood homes. They are also trying to prevent pollutants from being in the waters.

3. In your own words, how does the local government or water utility want to pay for its work on this issue or problem?

- A fee of \$5.42 per 3200 square feet of developed land. A house would pay \$5.42, and a business would pay more based on how large the business is.
- They will charge a fee to residents.
- They want to pay for their work by charging the residents (including businesses) who live in the city.
- By charging the customers more.
- there will be a water utility tax charged twice a year to residents and government property.
- By charging the public.
- By assessing a \$5.24 fee per a unit of residential and business space. For example the a unit would be 3200 sq feet of residential space.
- I do not think the local government wants to pay, or can, so they want to charge everyone a fee each month to pay for it.
- With a fee.
- the government wants to charge a fee to customers for non-absorptive areas on their property like driveways, sidewalk, asphalt, this would be an extra charge on the property tax bill.
- By setting fees set on your property real estate tax twice a year, this covers \$5.24 for every 3200 feet of land you own.
- That want to tax property owners \$5.54 (not sure of the exact amount) in order to help pay for improvements to the water runoff system.
- By using resident/business tax dollars.
- The county is looking to apply a fee (ERU) to single family property of about \$5.20 per 3500 square foot property to help pay for the problem. Businesses will pay about 10x that amount. Owners of undeveloped land will not have to pay fees until the property becomes developed.
- they have an equal fee for the single family homes and businesses .
- The government is adding a fee onto the real estate tax for each developed property.
- by adding a fee onto it's residents utility water bill.
- Through a service fee on businesses and residents.
- By charging a fee to all homes and businesses within the city limits.
- charge the citizens.
- They want to charge per EDU 5.24 per month to allocate money for the service.
- They want home and business owners to pay for it.

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- They want to charge the citizens a fee for water that enters the system from land that they own. This fee would be waived in certain situations such as the property being a vacant lot.
- To charge a fee on property taxes for cost of care.
- Every household and business will be charged a monthly fee.

## Program Impressions

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The government will collect the money fairly	7.6 %	7.6 %	7.6 %	50.0 %	26.9 %
The government will spend the money wisely	11.5 %	23.0 %	26.9 %	34.6 %	3.8 %
This program will make a positive difference for the community	7.6 %	3.8 %	19.2 %	50.0 %	19.2 %

In your own words, please elaborate on your answer to the last statement about "making a difference."

- It will keep the water cleaner, but probably anger people because of the fee levied.
- Unless it is done, there will be property damage and health risks.
- It will make a difference because as it stands now, that storm water runoff is not treated for the pollution that enters the water. The water will be treated once the citizens start paying for it. After all, the citizens are the ones who are not picking up after their animals, using pesticides, fertilizers and other things causing the pollution. Doing something about the situation will help the natural water that people swim in and use for other reasons.
- It will improve the overall look of the community as well as making their system up to code.
- it's needed for the community. it is both beneficial and also preventing harmful things from happening.
- it is a basic community need for a growing community. our country needs to place more value on investing in itself, keeping things up, and moving way forward with innovation as well.
- I feel this program would improve the amount of bacteria/litter in the lakes/rivers etc. by getting rid of it at the source before it flows into the other water. It sounds like it would help prevent flooding in residential/business areas.
- The fee will be used to improve facilities, which should reduce the amount of toxins being discharged into bodies of water because of storm water runoff.
- It will only make a positive difference in the community if the funds are used as they claim they would be used. It could generate more jobs for people out of work and I think it could manage flooding and land damage too.
- There would, hopefully, be less pollution in the water and environment as a whole.

- Getting rid of extra pollution like litter will keep the storm sewers running more efficiently, and since this water is pretty much fed right back into the environment, the cleaner it is, the better.
- Contaminated rain water causes environmental hazards when the water gets contaminated. If nothing else we need to protect the community from such hazards to the lakes, rivers, and drinking water.
- I don't trust the government at all when it comes to allocating funds properly. and because of their mismanagement the fees will eventually have to go up.
- I'm neutral. It can go either way depending upon the players involved.
- If not having enough money to properly clean up soil, road and other areas close to rivers, streams and lakes was the problem. Then I think collecting fees fairly from residents is important and it will benefit generations to come by giving them clean water to drink and have for recreation purposes.
- I think as long as the government does exactly what they say they will with this money it will have a positive impact on the quality of water we have.
- The project will ideally help prevent flooding due to excessive storm water runoffs by improving the drainage system and also help reduce pollution in the storm water by street sweeping and other means.
- cleaner streets and less pet/wild animal waste will mean lower pollution and bacteria in the storm water. better runoffs will mean less flooding in the city.
- Because the runoff goes back into streams and lakes, improving the quality of the runoff will cause less damage to the local environment.
- The program will ensure that storm water is routed out of the city and not cause flooding and property damage.
- It will make a difference that will be seen in the long run even when people are mad about the fees.
- Only time will tell. If the money is used like it is intended it will be fine.
- I would have to see proof that they were making a difference before I believed it.
- If handled properly it should make the community cleaner and handle waste water in a simpler, more efficient manner.
- i feel that the outcome is safer for residents, but the fees involved are somewhat unfair to the residents due to taxes increasing every year anyways.
- storms drains are much better than flooded basements and streets.

## Swap the Shoptalk

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The piece has a clear message	3.8 %	7.6 %	7.6 %	30.7 %	50.0 %
I could explain this piece to others without showing it to them	7.6 %	11.5 %	3.8 %	53.8 %	23.0 %
The piece was prepared with the general public in mind	3.8 %	0.0 %	15.3 %	38.4 %	42.3 %

In your own words, how would you describe the audience this piece is intended for?

- It could be for the general citizenry, but it almost seems like it is meant to convince lawmakers.
- People who are somewhat interested in politics and government. Not a general audience, but not experts.
- The audience this piece is intended for are probably busy working people who have families, and they probably don't give much thought to things that are discussed in the piece because they're busy.
- The piece was written well in a way that the average person, both young and old could understand.
- The people who will be affected by this change.
- Anyone who takes an active role in their community or political initiatives. But it's written in layman's terms that the average person could understand, yes.
- It comes across as if this piece was for the general public as the questions were things that the general public would ask about the situation. It covered everything a normal taxpayer/fee payer would ask and be concerned with.
- For all the residents of the city of Suffolk who have public health concerns about storm water runoff and what it contains.
- I think the audience would be more for the city council than it would be for the public. I think if it were intended more for the public it would have described the benefits to the public in much more detail.
- Average citizens.
- This article explains what will be done with the money collected for this service, what it will be used for, why it's beneficial.
- This piece is intended for the local residence in the area and is written well.
- I guess its intended for property owners in the city of Suffolk but since they talk about education, I suppose its intended for every citizen of Suffolk.

- Residents and business owners in the City of Suffolk.
- I believe the intended audience was for everyone who cares about the environment and preserving it for future generations. The issue is serious and deserving attention from all citizens.
- i would describe them as average people and businesses that are concerned with the water supply and how much it costs to maintain that quality of life.
- The piece was intended for the general public living or having developed property within the city.
- I would say either city council members or voters.maybe even the residents themselves.
- People who really want to know what the Storm Water Fee is.
- I believe the audience is the businesses and homes of Suffolk, and it is intended to explain to them why they must pay this fee.
- The city wants more money to do something they have ability to do for cheaper. they will make extra money from this.
- I think the community that this is intended for will understand.
- To help soften the blow of the government taking my money.
- It is written for the common citizen living in Suffolk who will now have to pay this additional fee. It explains the whole thing in fairly simple terms which most people could easily follow.
- the local residents and business owners.
- citizens of the city who want to learn about the fee they will be charged.

## Insert the Words That Work

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The issue is important to society	4.0 %	4.0 %	16.0 %	32.0 %	44.0 %
It is urgent to address this issue now	3.8 %	11.5 %	23.0 %	34.6 %	26.9 %
Issues like this affect me or my family	3.8 %	7.6 %	23.0 %	30.7 %	34.6 %

In your own words, please elaborate on your answer to the last statement, "issues like this affect me or my family."

- I do not want to be poisoned! The fee is a small amount to pay to ensure cleaner water.
- We have been experiencing stronger storms and more flooding. I am quite concerned about it, and feel that something must be done.
- It affects my family, but by how much? What other things are going on in the area that are not being attended to? How urgent is it compared to other things in the area? I would want to know more about what is going on city wide before I said yes to this new fee.
- If I lived there it would because it would cause my fees to increase.
- every day we are seeing earthquakes, hurricanes, extreme heat, extreme storms, wild wildfires, huge tornadoes, meltdowns, etc. That's only the major things. we've seen how vulnerable we are in the face of how extreme the globe has become with our lack of preparation and keeping up.
- In my area the storm water flow is abysmal. Every time there is a storm the neighborhood floods and there are HUGE flows going down major streets etc. that creates many hazards for locals.
- Pollution that finds its way into bodies of water from storm water runoff can impact my family because of the risk of ingesting the pollution and making my family sick.
- It does effect us, since we would be fined fees without even getting to vote on it or have any say in the matter. some people may not be able to afford the fees right now.
- Pollution affects everyone, but the storm water problem does not directly affect me or my family.
- Pollution in the sewer system and in water affects everyone everywhere.
- Living in a rural area there are rivers and streams close to my property.
- I don't think about issues like this because they don't affect me and my family. We are responsible property owners.
- This affects all people/families/businesses everywhere, not just the residents of Suffolk.

- I believe society as a whole has a responsibility to take all the steps necessary to protect the soil, water supply and air and keep it as free from pollution as possible. I believe cities and towns should also promote recycling and make it easy to do. In our town when they pick up the trash they should also pick up recycling but they don't do it. We have to take our recyclables somewhere else each week to make sure it is done.
- I think this is a pretty general issue that individuals like me and my family face on a regular basis. these operations can affect our finances and our well being.
- We have recently seen a large amount of flooding due to excessive storm water runoff in part caused by inadequate drainage systems. Large amounts of personal and public property was damaged as a result of the flooding.
- I live in an area where when it rains it floods so I now just how important it is to have good runoffs and no one likes to see storm water all oily and greasy. What makes matters worse is knowing just how polluted the water really is!
- The environment affects everyone, but it's rarely pressing.
- Storm water can cause serious flooding if a city does not have a way to get the waters out of the urban areas. Such water can also carry trash, bacteria and pollution from cities into nature, further deteriorating the planet. This affects both my future and the future earth for younger members of my family.
- the clean water, lakes and streams is important, but could be fixed another way than taxing or charging citizens for this.
- I do not live in a neighborhood. I reside in the middle of the desert.
- I have well water; I have a filtration system. I don't really need anything further to be done to make my water safe for consumption.
- From what I understand all water needs to be filtered before it is delivered to the customer.
- Therefore this does affect everyone on a larger scale.
- It seems every year we have things added on to our yearly property taxes ie: we had our road, sewer and curbs redone last year and it was split yearly onto our taxes.
- Flooding affects everyone in a city.

## Parting Thoughts

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In your own words, please share any parting thoughts you have for the organization that produced this piece. Remember, your identity is confidential.

- It maybe could have included some specifics about the chemicals found in the water as a result of runoff and the effects the chemicals have on people and the environment.
- I hope more is done about this!
- Thanks! This piece was interesting and helped me understand about the same type of situation in my own area. Something the average person probably doesn't think about.
- I don't have any other thoughts.
- I'm for all infrastructure repair and upgrading. our communities are not only crumbling but other parts of the world have soared past us.

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- I feel this is an interesting/productive idea and would overall assist greatly with reducing pollution, flow, flood prevention etc. Sounds like a good idea to me.
- I think it is a good idea, but some other ideas may be needed to be set fourth before the public.
- Some may argue that their taxes already pay for street sweeping.
- I think although the issue is important and could be beneficial to collect fees for maintainance, I think it is unfair and the fees to high. People should be fined less or on a sliding scale and they should have a say in the matter.
- What was proposed in the piece sounded like a good idea, but I'm not sure if it would actually work in practice.
- don't have any.
- Most people don't care about the environment around them, but it is important.
- Just another wasteful government tax.
- I wonder if raising taxes is the only way to get things done today. It seems to be the cure all for everything.
- I hope this legislation passes, even if people don't feel that they can afford the fee each month. It will reap big rewards down the road and keep the water in their area clean and benefit society.
- i think a balance between our finances and our health needs to be considered in these types of situations.
- Improvement of storm water management is definitely a good idea, especially with the increase in developed land which inhibits the natural collection of rainwater into the ground.
- this matter may be seen as just another fee that they are trying to stick you with but if there isn't any good runoffs the water just sits there and then your house floods and your car.so in the end which really costs more? a small fee or replacing everything you have work for?
- A summary of important parts (what it is, how much will be charged, when it will be charged) would have been helpful.
- The PDF was informative, but a little boring.
- I don't like the idea of extra fees and taxes. I think they should use volunteer work as an option and figure out easier ways to do this.
- I thought it was a fair attempt at making some things better for a part of the country.
- I troubled me. I hope it isn't a real tax, somewhere.
- It is a good thing to do, but residents and business owners may be upset at more expensive taxes.

## **About the Due Diligence Test Panel**

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Just whose opinions are these, anyway? The "Due Diligence Test Panel" is a standing body of U.S. residents who provide feedback on marketing materials and perform related tasks in return for payment.

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- Test panel members have the perspective of taxpayers and voters "in the wild." They are not professionals in the field.
- Test panel members have not participated in the drafting of the materials.
- Test panel members' feedback is not influenced by their personal relationship with you.
- The test panel more closely approximates the demographic makeup of U.S. taxpayers and voters than the staff of your organization.

Demographic Trait	Environmental Professionals	Due Diligence Test Panel	Traditional Telephone Poll, U.S. Sample	Actual U.S. (Census)
4 Year College Degree	95% or higher	~50%	~40%	27%
White/Caucasian	95% or higher	~80%	~80%	64%



# City of Suffolk Department of Public Works

## Storm Water Utility Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is a Storm Water Utility?**

A Storm Water Utility is responsible for funding the operation, management, construction and maintenance of Storm water facilities. This utility generates its revenue through user fees. The Storm water fee is a service fee and not a tax. The fees are used to maintain and upgrade drainage facilities within the City as well as funding state and federal mandates regarding storm water facility reviews, inspections, and the erosion and sediment control program that relates to new construction.

### **What is Storm water runoff?**

Storm water runoff results from rainfall. Typically, the more rainfall we get the less likely that the rainwater will be absorbed into the soils resulting in more storm water reaching our storm drains, ditches, streams, lakes and reservoirs.

### **Where are storm drains?**

For the most part, storm drains are located within the limits of the streets. Water typically flows across the land onto the road and gutters and into storm water inlets that are connected to the storm water drainage pipes. In the more rural areas, storm water is conveyed along roadside ditches.

### **Does this storm water get treated at the wastewater plant?**

No, storm water collected in the drainage system drains into our ditches and streams which discharge into lakes, rivers, or the Great Dismal Swamp.

### **What kind of pollution is in the rainfall runoff?**

The pollution depends on what the rainfall runoff is running off from. Nearly all runoff contains silt and soil as a result of erosion. Runoff from agricultural lands and our lawns often contain fertilizer and herbicides. Runoff from streets and highways may contain oil and grease plus heavy metals such as lead from gasoline exhaust emissions, selenium from tires, phosphorous and several others from a variety of sources.

### **Is trash and debris floating in the water considered pollution?**

Yes, the floating debris in the water is pollution and often termed floatables. Floatables are one of the simplest pollution to control – stop litter!

### **What about Bacteria?**

Another pollutant which gets into the storm water is bacteria. Bacteria originates from illicit sanitary sewer connections or overflows, pet and wild animal waste, and birds. The City has a program to eliminate illicit sanitary sewer connections and overflows. Picking up pet waste and properly disposing of it also eliminates bacteria.

### **What is the current program the City participates in?**

The City currently has a program to reduce erosion from new construction that follows State mandated guidelines; this program includes plan review services and inspection services. The City provides street sweeping in some areas of the city. The City of Suffolk is working with Hampton Roads Planning District Commission to get the public more involved by using public education.

### **Is the City's current program adequate?**

No, the new federal regulations require more involvement. The State has recently changed the erosion regulations. The City of Suffolk is growing and more land is being developed. In addition, the past amount of money has not been able to keep up with the drainage and flooding problems.

### **How does the City plan to acquire the necessary funds to meet the new regulations and provide a higher level of service for its citizens?**

The City has established a storm water utility fee similar to most other cities in the Hampton Roads area. The advantage of the source of funding is that it can only be used for storm water and related projects and that everyone pay an equitable amount.

### **Why is the Storm Water Fee necessary?**

The Storm Water Fee is a result of the Federal Clean Water Act of 1972 and amendments thereafter. The regulations require cities to make improvements to reduce the amount of pollution from storm water runoff. These improvements include public education as well as removing pollution at the source. There are no federal or state dollars provided to implement water quality measures so the Storm Water Fee has been adopted. The fee also provides dedicated revenue for constructing more facilities to decrease drainage problems and flooding as well as providing maintenance of those already constructed.

## **How was the Storm Water Fee determined?**

The revenues required were calculated to provide money to develop and implement a program based upon providing a level of service determined necessary to meet the regulations and the needs of our Citizens. The fee is based on a charge per residential home to create those revenues. Each residential home will be charged the same amount, called an Equivalent Residential Unit. Commercial businesses will be charged a multiple of the Equivalent Residential Unit.

## **What is the Storm Water Fee used for?**

It may be used to fund many programs related to water quality including environmental education, street sweeping, capital improvements to the system, drainage maintenance, administration, review of permits, inspection, and monitoring activities. It may also be used for correcting storm water drainage problems, ditch and stream cleaning to provide more capacity for water to run off and to maintain certain retention basins or other best management practices.

## **What is an Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU)?**

The ERU is a unit of measure to compare runoff generated by different size properties and varying amounts of impervious areas. ERUs are computed by randomly selecting several hundred single family homes and measuring the impervious area and then taking the average. ***In Suffolk, one ERU is equal to 3,200 square feet (a weighted average for both single-family and multi-family properties). A commercial property equal to 10 ERUs would pay 10 times the ERU charge.***

## **What is impervious area?**

Impervious areas are any surface areas on developed property that rainfall will not be absorbed into the ground. These areas include, but are not limited to the roofs of houses and other buildings, patios, driveways, parking areas and walkways.

## **How will the Storm Water Fee be collected and what will it cost?**

The fee will be collected via your real estate property tax bill due in June and December of each year. The fee will be charged to the owner of the property. ***The fee has been set at \$5.24 per ERU per month.***

**Do I have to pay the Storm Water Fee on a vacant lot?**

No, you do not have to pay the storm water fee until the parcel of land is developed.

**Will agricultural land be charged the storm water fee?**

No, agricultural lands will not be charged under the storm water fee. If there is a house or business on part of the land, that would be charged accordingly.

**Do State and Federal developed properties pay the charge?**

Yes, state and federal developed properties pay the storm water charge. They are exempt from the storm water fee if they have a separate storm water permit, and they discharge directly to a body of water that Suffolk has no maintenance obligation over.

**What length of roadways does Suffolk currently maintain?**

Approximately 631 miles of roadway, of which roughly 300 miles are curb and gutter within Suffolk. The City assumed responsibility for these roads in July, 2006.

**What categories may be included in the Storm water Program?**

The Storm water Program may include Preventive and General Maintenance Repair of the Storm water Facilities including certain storm water ponds in residential neighborhoods, Street Sweeping, GIS Updating and Maintenance, Plan Review & Approval Process, Infrastructure Site Inspection, and Capital Improvement Projects.

**Has the Public been involved in the Program?**

Yes. Since the beginning, a Citizens Advisory Committee of several Citizens as well City staff, has worked to establish policy and procedures. Prior to City Council taking action, there were Public Information meetings and a Public Hearing. In addition, there will be a Public Information program to provide more about the program's implementation.



## Memorandum

To: Zachary Henderson, Woodard & Curran

From: Eric Eckl

Re: Due Diligence Test Panel Feedback on Morgantown, WV's "Morgan Mallard Q&A"

Date: 9/12/2011

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Here are the panelists' scores and comments on Morgantown, WV's "Morgan Mallard Q&A." The brochure itself is appended to this report.

Bottom line here: The piece inspires more sense of urgency about the problem than confidence in the proposed solution. Strong majorities agree that "the issue is important to society," "it is urgent to address this issue now," and "issues like this affect me and my family."

But after reading this piece, barely half (52%) of the panelists agree "the government will spend the money wisely" and only 16% agreed "the images help me understand how my money will be used."

*Note: All panelists' comments are provided verbatim, including spelling, grammar, and typos.*

## Overall Impressions

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1. In your own words, describe the social issue or problem the piece is about:

- Stormwater runoff and its costs.
- It is about pollution caused by stormwater runoff that can harm our water supply and the animals and plants that live downstream of us.
- Water runoff from residential areas going into the river.
- Storm water polluting the watershed with harmful levels of sediment and bacteria in Morgantown.
- Storm water runoff facilities need to be upgraded per new federal law to prevent flooding and the degrading of the Urban Environment.
- need revenue to control stormwater management.
- The EPA claims that Morgantown's watershed has to be improved to prevent water contamination during times of flooding.

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- the local government wants to charge people by how much water goes into the water shed
- The town is required to meet EPA standards for water runoff. To update everything needed to meet those standards, they need more money. This will allow for cleaner water and fewer flooding issues.
- Charging property owners a monthly fee on their water bill to help reduce flooding by making the drainage system better.
- The EPA has imposed stricter regulations on the town, so they need to control their rainwater runoff better.
- It is about solving the watershed problem, and complying with new EPA standards.
- This is about dealing with the stormwater and stormwater runoff pollution in the area of Morgantown, WV.
- The issue is stormwater runoff and how its consequences should be handled.
- That water run off is causing too much water to run into the water shed and the local government wants to propose extra taxes on the residents based on how much water runs off their property into the watershed.
- waste stormwater polluting the environment.
- Increased fee collection to improve storm drainage.
- There is lack of water in Morgantown, WV. A watershed construction will provide better water and also produce jobs.
- Large paved areas cause excess water to flood into the storm sewer system. The system becomes overwhelmed and the water escapes from the sewage system causing a large number of problems with contamination.
- CHANGE IN NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CAUSES PROGRAM, PROGRAM NEEDS FUNDING, WHO'S GONNA PAY?
- Pollution from water run-off going into the watershed and decreasing the quality of water  
they have a water running sewerage issue, like oil runoff from parking lots and fertilizer runoff from lawns. and rain water which comes from roofs, streets etc collects in the city storm sewer. and when it gets overwhelms then these facilities fail to function as designed.
- The city of Morgantown is being forced to manage their rainwater run-off. They haven't been given federal money to implement strategies to comply with these goals so they must pass the cost directly to Morgantown property owners. The service fee will impact those with a greater area of paved surfaces than those with more grass and trees.
- Storm Water Utility and fees.

2. In your own words, how does the local government or water utility plan to solve this issue or problem?

- By investing more in stormwater management (repairs, maintenance) etc. to comply with federal regulations.
- By taxing the individual homeowner based upon what they have on their property and how much harmful runoff their property will produce.
- Enact fees to residents.

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- By building additional storm water management facilities.
- They need to upgrade storm runoff facilities to comply with new federal government regulations, such as upgrading the sewer systems.
- assess the public.
- Update the storm water management system to comply with the new Government standards. They don't say EXACTLY what they will do but one assumes new pipes, trenches and the like.
- by using the tax revenue to help direct and cleanup the water shed.
- By building new stormwater management facilities that will help control flooding and clean the water.
- They will build a storm system infrastructure, that will make it so when it rains the water will go into sewers and ditches that will then take the water to local streams that will carry it to lake erie.
- They plan to build new facilities to handle the extra water.
- I don't see any specific ways they are going to solve this problem. They want to change the way it is funded by collecting a specific tax, rather than funding out of the general revenue fund.
- by having people pay a stormwater utility fee based on their usage.
- The proposed solution is to regard runoff into the watershed as the use of a utility and to charge for use of that utility.
- They plan on assessing properties and deciding how much is payed based on runoff from the property.
- raising money from local residents.
- Unclear. Presumably by improving the drainage system to prevent overflowing.
- Create and construct a watershed in this area. This will stimulate the economy by producing jobs in this area.
- They must expand their existing system to handle this excess water flow during storm events.
- CHARGE RESIDENTS.
- by adding in new stormwater management facilities.
- they plan to actively manage storm water to the new FPA standards. and morgantown is subject to significant penalties if they fail to comply with the federal requirements.
- They are going to enhance their stormwater management practices which will result in better water quality, among a number of other possible benefits.
- By charging a storm water utility fee.

3. In your own words, how does the local government or water utility want to pay for its work on this issue or problem?

- By charging a monthly utility fee in addition to current fees.
- By taxing the individual homeowner based upon what they have on their property and how much harmful runoff their property will produce.
- "Charge a fee of \$1 per household, with a higher fee for apts, businesses, and homes with large concrete areas."

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- They want to assess a fee on all properties that discharge water into the watershed by adding the fee to the water utility billing.
- By assessing fees on residential and non-residential commercial properties.
- it plans to charge the public who discharge water into the watershed.
- Tax the HELL out of people, especially small business owners. Then raise the rates in a month or so!
- by charging the individual household and business by how much they contribute to the runoff .
- They plan to charge a fee to everyone who owns property that allows water to not be absorbed into the ground, i.e. any cement or building areas that cause the water to run off.
- they want to charge land owners a monthly fee of around 3.16. supposedly this will raise around 12 million a year to pay to infrastructure, and also engineering cost.
- They will enact a tax on all properties in the area, based on how much rainwater is expected to run off from the property.
- They will charge a monthly rate. There is one rate for single family homes, and another rate for businesses and multi-unit properties.
- by having the citizens pay for it as a utility fee because of new federal standards.
- Watershed usage (in relation to runoff) is determine by a rate times the number of square feet occupied by a residence or non-residential property, exclusive of natural features (such as lawns, etc).
- By taxing the locals.
- from additional taxes on single family residences.
- Collecting money money from property owners and tenants.
- Taxes and Fees.
- A graduated tax on property owners based upon how much they contribute to the problem.
- CHARGE RESIDENTS.
- They want to add a fee to the utility bill that is based on the amount of run-off water a property produces, and with an averaged fee for town dwellers.
- according to west virginia law all properties who are discharging water into the city watershed are required to participate in the stormwater utility, no matter if their property is within or outside the city limit. in simple words they will charge base upon the amount of stomwater runs off a property and into their watershed.
- They are charging an additional service fee to property owners in proportion to the amount of rainwater that runs off of their property.
- By charging a fee to residents and businesses twice annually.

## Program Impressions

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The government will collect the money fairly	12.0 %	16.0 %	4.0 %	44.0 %	24.0 %
The government will spend the money wisely	8.0 %	20.0 %	20.0 %	48.0 %	4.0 %
This program will make a positive difference for the community	4.0 %	8.0 %	20.0 %	52.0 %	16.0 %

In your own words, please elaborate on your answer to the last statement about "making a difference."

- If the fees collected really allow for significant improvements in stormwater management, then it should save the community money in the long run (both the government and individuals) and also have a positive impact on health.
- If you keep your water supply clean, it will make for a better quality of life for all living creatures within your water runoff area.
- I think pesticides and fertilizers in the water systems is a big issue that needs to be addressed, so to make people aware and think about the consequences is a good thing. Less pollution and flood control would also be positives.
- It will improve the communities water quality, flood control, public education, and reduction in pollution by sanitary sewers.
- By improving the water run off facilities, flooding chances will be reduced, sparing homes and businesses damage and exposure to water contaminants.
- if it keeps the water clean, it's a good thing.
- I've seen over 50 years of "government" improvements - most are boondoggles. I haven't seen any data that shows Morgantown has poor water quality - where's the data?? This is just another EPA regulation to grow bureaucracy and tax us to death! Show me graphs and charts proving Morgantown (which, believe it or not, is where I spent my honeymoon!)has dangerous water conditions due to storm water drainage!
- I think this will make a positive difference the question is how much of difference it is going to make.
- If the government spends the money wisely, it will make the water cleaner and help flooding.
- I think it will make a postive difference because it will stop a lot of flooding that if happened would cost the people a lot more that 3.16 a month.

- The program will slightly improve the quality of life for the residents, by improving the quality of their water. However, the new tax will hurt the residents.
- I'm not sure if it will make a difference. It seems to be just changing the way it is funded.
- if the money is used correctly and for the right reasons, it should help make a difference in managing the stormwater issues.
- If the program leads to a reduction in the amount of storm runoff, it will benefit the community.
- I don't feel that it will make a difference, because regardless of how much more is being payed, the water can always build up and cause more damae than expected. Extra taxes are not a solution to the problem.
- it wont make a very significant difference.
- I was not convinced that this was a problem, and did not learn much about how the government planned on solving the problem.
- By constructing this watershed, water will be in abundance and the construction job will produce jobs in the area.
- If the program is carried out properly it will most likely improve the area's water quality.
- BELIEVE CLAIMS ARE TRUE REGARDING STORM WATER
- Perhaps if they did the upgrades properly, it would enhance water quality and help prevent flooding, but the local government seldom does such things properly.
- i think it is very good idea, if everyone in their community will participate in it then they can solve this issue easily and it will make a big difference.
- I'm not sure a number of residents will even feel the difference. This is different than saying the project is not worthwhile. Many environmental projects do not result the community even knowing about the positive benefits of managing storm water.
- The funds help maintain the program, and the program is necessary to continue directing rainwater into storm drains which prevents flooding and street damage.

## Find Foolproof Photos

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The images get my attention	8.0 %	12.0 %	8.0 %	56.0 %	16.0 %
The images help me understand the problem	12.0 %	24.0 %	12.0 %	36.0 %	16.0 %
The images help me understand how my money will be used	24.0 %	44.0 %	16.0 %	16.0 %	0.0 %

In your own words, please elaborate on your thoughts about the images in this piece:

- I like the photos that show real situations with water. The cartoon mallard guy made me think at first this was going to be a piece aimed at kids. More photos (or real damage and real solutions) might be more compelling.
- I believe using simple cartoons make it easier to understand the problem and illustrate the need
- I thought the images were cute and helped explain the piece. It did not seem like dry information.
- The images show where the problem exists, and the additional images are creative to get someones attention, without being depressing.
- The images lighten the mood of asking residents to pay more money.
- The images don't seem to be useful at all.
- They are for children - silly cartoons! If you are going to tax me and families and small business' in our community, I want you to be serious. Where are the images of WHAT the improvement looks like? Where are the graphs and charts showing water pollution problems?
- I think they were pretty self explanatory.
- Kind of silly looking, but they made their point about pollution.
- need better images, they look old and don't really get the point across.
- The images with the duck are kind of cute and make the document seem more friendly.
- The images seem rather childish to me.
- the images don't really tell much, but they are pleasant, this explains it pretty well.
- Interesting, but my opinion was based more on reading the text.
- Te images were really eye catching. The truck driving through the water does help make an impact on how people are affected, but I still think that the government needs to use the resources they already collect from citizens and spend it wisely so that it can be used for situations like this.
- images look cartoony.
- They were pretty obnoxious.

- The piece shows the areas that will be affected by the watershed construction near and around Morgantown, WV.
- The map was fine. The little cartoon characters did nothing for me, but I can see where they might draw other's attention.
- THEY KEEP IT LIGHT DURING A TENSE TOPIC.
- The more cartoony images seemed to trivialize the problem somewhat.
- yeah images helped me alot to understand the problem.
- The images were cartoon-y without much substance behind them. They make the material seem lighter but they don't help explain the information being presented.

## Swap the Shoptalk

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The piece has a clear message	4.0 %	8.0 %	4.0 %	36.0 %	48.0 %
I could explain this piece to others without showing it to them	0.0 %	12.0 %	4.0 %	24.0 %	60.0 %
The piece was prepared with the general public in mind	0.0 %	4.1 %	12.5 %	37.5 %	45.8 %

In your own words, how would you describe the audience this piece is intended for?

- Anyone who has property in the Morgantown area who will be affected by the new fees.
- All property owners with water runoff issues.
- People in the area who would be charged the new fee.
- It is intended for any citizen to look at and understand.
- For everyone who has property interests in the Morgantown watershed area who has an obligation to pay for storm water runoff upgrades.
- the general tax-paying public.
- Ignorant folk! People who believe that the government can solve our problems. People who take for granted that the EPA is god and has deemed it necessary to fix problems we didn't even KNOW we had! Ignorant and uneducated folks.
- I would describe them as regular citizens and business owners that want to know how the government is going to handle these kinds of issues.
- Homeowners and business owners who will be paying the fee.
- This piece was made for people in high risk flooding areas. It appeals to everyone, and is easy to understand.
- all residents of the area.
- It is intended for all residents of the area.
- it is for people living in this area who might have questions about how the utility for stormwater runoff is going to be used.
- Ordinary citizens.
- This piece is intended to persuade the locals into paying more money.
- too much text and too much to read (no one reads this much).
- Presumably it was intended for the general public.
- Individuals interested in cleaner and abundant water. People who want to stimulate the economy by producing jobs.

- The general population, with limited education, and who doesn't really see this issue as a current problem.
- WEST VIRGINIA RESIDENTS.
- It seems it was intended for those members of the community who already have a good understanding of the issue or who will be likely to vote for the policy.
- yes the piece is very easy to understand for any kind of audience.
- This piece is intended for residents of the city of Morgantown. They are likely spread across a range of educational backgrounds so making the information simple to access allows more people to understand the message.
- Citizens questioning the storm water utility fee.

## Insert the Words That Work

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The issue is important to society	8.0 %	4.0 %	8.0 %	28.0 %	52.0 %
It is urgent to address this issue now	8.0 %	8.0 %	16.0 %	32.0 %	36.0 %
Issues like this affect me or my family	12.0 %	4.0 %	8.0 %	48.0 %	28.0 %

In your own words, please elaborate on your answer to the last statement, "issues like this affect me or my family."

- It sounds like for many property owners, stormwater could be a potential source of expensive problems. And beyond that, there are potential health issues like contaminated water.
- I live on a farm and this is an issue because alot of fertilizer and chemicals are used on this farm and have to be regulated so not to cause harm downstream/
- Issues regarding clean water and environment affect us all. These kinds of issues are happening in all areas.
- These types of issues affect everyone. If we allow our water to become degraded, everyone suffers, it doesn't matter where you are located.
- flooding is a major concern for all homeowners. Many think about the physical damage but many do not think about the water borne containment's that are present in flood water.
- what affects one of us, affects us all.
- I live in Florida where we have had lots of experience with hurricanes and tropical storms. One year we had 30" of rain over 2 days! We dig lots of trenches to move the water. We NEVER had any problem with our water quality for more than a day - and in the 30 years I've lived here that was TWICE! And not due to the storms, but to problems with the plant cleansing the water - it had busted pipes. I can't afford any more taxes. And it's so BOGUS that it will create jobs. The jobs are only temporary and it COSTS jobs because the population has LESS to spend at the grocery because of taxes. Plus the business are raising prices to cover the taxes. Plus the jobs END when the work is completed.
- issues like this affect me and my family either directly or indirectly by either taxing or taxing businesses which in return charge more for their services.
- Polluted water affects everyone in the area, so cleaner water is better for everyone.

- Don't effect me, because i don't live in an area that floods often, and i live at the highest point in our town.
- I live in an apartment, so I don't think I would be affected as much by the new tax.
- It is a problem for everyone, whether is affects the water quality, or affects flooding issues.
- flooding, stormwater runoff, this all affects people who live near rivers and streams because when the waters rise, they fill with pollution, and when they recede, the pollution is left behind.
- Strmwater runoff affects the cost and quality of water: these, more broadly, effect the quality of life.
- It would have a great affect on my family if this issue were not solved. However, taxes are already collected and it is not the fault of the citizens that the government exhausted it's resources. they may affect.
- The piece was light on data indicating that this was a real problem.
- Water is essential to living. A watershed in the community will supply that need.
- I have a well, so water quality can directly impact my health. I personally live in a very rural area, so I don't see this particularly affecting me right now, but it could in the future.
- WE HAVE OUR OWN STUFF-EARTHQUAKES,ETC.
- If it is true that such run-off water decreases the quality of drinking water and other water that we use, then of course it affects me or my family. Everyone needs clean and safe water.
- its mean this issue will effect most of families, and even if i have this issue then it will effect me and my family and i will try my best to solve it as soon as possible.
- I live in an area with a lot of lakes and streams. Keeping them clean and keeping storm water from introducing more waste into them is important and impacts my life.
- If everyone is required to pay this fee, then the issue affects everyone.

## Parting Thoughts

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In your own words, please share any parting thoughts you have for the organization that produced this piece. Remember, your identity is confidential.

- I'm not necessarily anti-mallard and realize the character may be used in other ways as part of a larger campaign -- but in this application, he doesn't add anything and sort of seems superfluous to the information.
- It is important that we take responsibility for keeping our waterways clean.
- I think that use of fertilizer and pesticide etc. should be charged the extra fees instead of concrete areas. Maybe giving people suggestions to help with the issue could also help.
- I think the piece is good. It explains the problem, and the plan to solve it. The additional money needed is minimal per homeowner, and nobody should oppose the minor amount being asked of everybody in order to keep the water clean for everyone.

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- New federal guidelines on water runoff may seem like another way to collect money from citizens but the systems do need to be upgraded to protect the public.
- we must protect our water.
- People need to wake up and see how the EPA is blowing things out of proportion! This piece is more about fear mongering and taxation and growing bureaucracy than it is about water quality.
- Where are the charts and graphs???
- I think how the government handles these types of situations is key.
- The way the money is to be spent needs to be elaborated on. A general statement about new facilities and construction around town really doesn't tell the reader what is going to be done with their money. I actually live somewhere where this exact type of thing was implemented and there was such a negative reaction to it that they had to repeal it.
- none don't really have any.
- A few cost illustrations would help.
- The piece itself is eye catching and it is put together in a well thought manner. However I do not agree with this proposal because it requires citizens to pay even more.
- this piece is too huge for the importance of the issue.
- It was too long and very repetitive.
- The idea is good one but may come across opposition due to higher taxes or fees.
- I think this is good work.
- INFRASTRUCTURE HAS ALWAYS BEEN TAXPAYER
- It annoyed me that there were so many typos in the piece, such as "contaniments" for "contaminants."
- A brochure released by a public utility should be professionally presented and free of such errors.
- The wording also should be simplified, if they want to reach members of the community who might not read at a higher level. I doubt many average people would understand what is meant by "surcharge into the watershed." That is an unusual phrasing, and it sounds like someone showing off his/her vocabulary, rather than someone who wants his/her writing to be understood by all! An important issue deserves to be explained in a simple and comprehensive manner.
- i think this piece is very important for all those people who live there and have this issue. and it is a nice idea to solve this issue
- I thought the piece succeeded in introducing the topic to residents. It explained why the actions were being taken, how they would be funded, and who would be affected.

## **About the Due Diligence Test Panel**

Just whose opinions are these, anyway? The "Due Diligence Test Panel" is a standing body of U.S. residents who provide feedback on marketing materials and perform related tasks in return for payment.

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A major corporation recruits the board members, maintains the feedback system, and acts as a financial middleman. Water Words That Work, LLC has devised this questionnaire and subscribes to the service, as do other marketing firms.

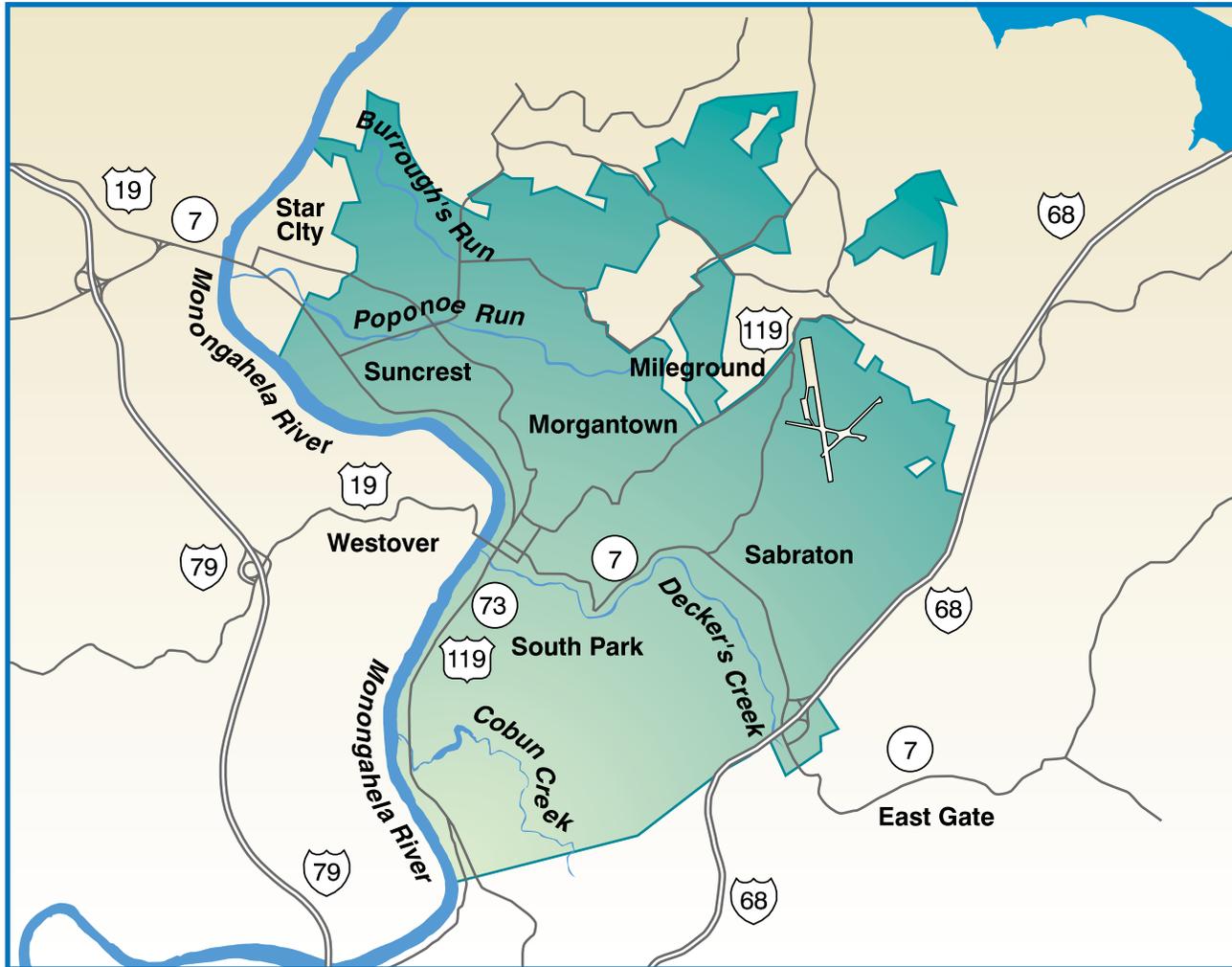
The feedback that you receive from the test panel is different from feedback you receive from your peers, for three reasons:

- The test panel members who review your materials have the perspective of everyday citizen "in the wild." They are not professionals in the field and have not participated in the drafting of the materials.
- The test panel members have never met you, and will provide their feedback anonymously. Their feedback will not be influenced by their personal relationship with you.
- The test panel more closely approximates the demographic makeup (especially race and education) of the U.S. "public" than the staff and board of most nature protection and pollution control organizations.

Demographic Trait	Environmental Professionals	Do Diligence Test Panel	Traditional Telephone Poll, U.S. Sample	Actual U.S. (Census)
4 Year College Degree	95% or higher	~50%	~40%	27%
White/Caucasian	95% or higher	~80%	~80%	64%

## Our Morgantown Watershed

A watershed is an area that drains naturally into downhill streams and rivers. Our urban watershed includes the Monongahela River, Decker's Creek, Burrough's Run, Poponoe Run, and smaller streams in and around the city.



*"Threats to our water no longer come from one big pipe pumping out thousands of gallons of waste every day into a local river, [but from] numerous much smaller practices, such as oil runoff from parking lots and fertilizer runoff from our lawns."*

Christine Todd Whitman, EPA Administrator



This brochure prepared by:  
Morgantown Utility Board  
West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection



Photo courtesy of the Dominion Post

# Is unmanaged stormwater polluting our town and streams?



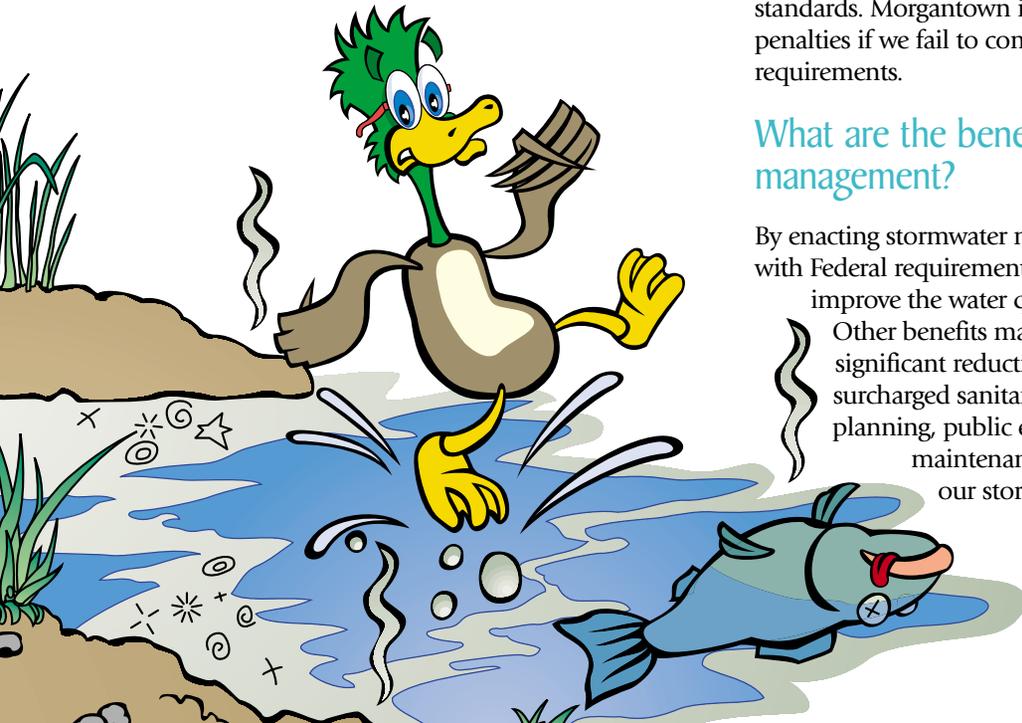
Stormwater and sanitary sewage discharging into Decker's Creek, Spring 2000.



Pollution caused by stormwater runoff harms our urban watershed. Rainwater discharges into our waters during and after a storm often contain harmful levels of sediment, bacteria, and other contaminants. Unmanaged excess rainwater can also cause our sanitary sewers to surcharge into the watershed.

The EPA estimates that stormwater is responsible for over 5,000 miles of impaired streams in our region.

Unmanaged stormwater has caused millions of dollars of property damage in and around Morgantown.



# STORMWATER

## What happens when it rains?

Rainwater runs across impervious surfaces (parking lots, roofs, streets, etc.) and collects in the City's storm sewers. Most of this water then travels directly into our rivers and streams. Occasionally, excess rainwater overwhelms the storm sewers, or these facilities fail to function as designed. The water then floods into our homes, businesses and streets. In some locations (depending on the age and design of the storm and sanitary sewers) rainwater may overflow out of the storm sewer system and into an adjacent sanitary sewer system. These excess flows may be discharged directly into the watershed.

## What are we required to do with the stormwater?

The Federal EPA has designated Morgantown as a "Phase 2" stormwater community. This means that the City must actively manage stormwater to the new EPA standards. Morgantown is subject to significant penalties if we fail to comply with the Federal requirements.

## What are the benefits of stormwater management?

By enacting stormwater management, we will comply with Federal requirements. This also means that we will improve the water quality in our urban watershed.

Other benefits may include flood control, a significant reduction in pollution caused by surcharged sanitary sewers, improved watershed planning, public education, and improved maintenance, repair, and expansion of our stormwater collection system.



## Isn't this service paid for out of my taxes?

Until now, stormwater management has been funded out of the City's general revenue fund through dollars generated by taxation. Compliance with the new Federal standard requires considerable additional funding. Additionally, to support the many new construction projects in our town, we must provide new stormwater management facilities. Without additional efforts toward stormwater management, urban development in and around Morgantown will degrade the quality of our water, and thus our quality of life. Therefore, City Council has established a reliable and fair system to collect additional and dedicated revenues for stormwater management.

## What is a fair way to fund the required stormwater management activities?

In accordance with West Virginia law, all properties discharging water into the City watershed are required to participate in the stormwater utility, regardless of whether the property is within or outside the City limits. As with any other utility service, fees are assessed based upon the amount of service provided by the utility. In other words, a service fee is charged based upon the amount of stormwater that runs off a property and into our watershed.

# Your Responsibility

...as a resident or property owner in the Morgantown watershed



In order to protect our water quality and control against flooding, all properties in the Morgantown watershed are required by law to participate in the stormwater utility, regardless of whether the property is within or outside the City limits. As with other utility service, fees are based on the amount of service provided. In other words, your service fee for stormwater management is based on the amount of water that runs off of a property and into the watershed. Since water is absorbed by the ground in its natural state, this generally means that a property with a large paved area or roof will be assessed a higher fee than the same sized property with only grass and trees.



## Single-Family Homes

Everyone living in single-family homes in the Morgantown watershed will pay an average service rate for water quality protection and control against flooding through stormwater management. Beginning on August 1, 2002, this rate will be \$1 per month per single-family household. After August 1, 2003, the rate for stormwater management for single households will be \$3.63 per month.

## Businesses & Multi-Unit Properties

Non-residential rates include any business, organization or apartment complex which does not fall under the single-family household rate. Beginning on August 1, 2002, the rate for non-residential service will be \$7.00 per building per month.

After August 1, 2003, the rate for stormwater management for non-residential properties will be \$1.45 per 1,000 square feet. Where there are multiple tenants on a property, each tenant may pay a share of the service charge. It is important to remember that the charge per square feet refers to impervious surfaces only. Lawns and other areas in their natural state will not be included in the rate assessment.



Please feel free to call 304-292-8443 with questions, or visit us on the web at [www.mub.org](http://www.mub.org).



## Memorandum

To: Zachary Henderson, Woodard & Curran

From: Eric Eckl

Re: Due Diligence Test Panel Feedback on the Far West Agribusiness Association's "A Stormwater Tax is a Bad Idea in 2011, just like it was in 2010 and 2009"

Date: 9/12/2011

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Here are the panelists' scores and comments on the Far West Agribusiness Association's "A Stormwater Tax is a Bad Idea in 2011, just like it was in 2010 and 2009"

The piece hones in on the fairness of the fee or tax, and lands that punch pretty solidly. More than 60% of panelists *disagree* that the "government will collect the money fairly." Almost 70% *disagree* that the "government will spend the money wisely."

Even after reading such a scathing piece, 42% of panelists nevertheless agreed that "the program will make a positive difference for the community" and offer feedback such as:

- If the environmental clean up is done, then the health risks involved with the stormwater contamination, then the cost of \$.03 was worth it.
- Even though it is a tax, it probably would have a positive effect on the community. Overall it probably, if spent well, would help eliminate the problem.
- these are highly polluting industries and I think they should pay accordingly and not make idle threats.

The authors were effective at making the case that the affected industries would pass the costs along to customers. 62% of the panelists agreed that "issues like this affect me and my family."

However, the piece was not as effective at making readers outside the issue feel like they were truly part of it:

- I would say this piece was destined for the petroleum and farmers to rile them up to fight against this new fee/tax.
- While I think the words were written by a person that is directly affected by the tax, government too could really use an honesty pill.
- This is a thinly veiled threat, in my opinion, basically saying they will put people out of their jobs in order to be able to comply with this fee.

*Note: All panelists' comments are provided verbatim, including spelling, grammar, and typos.*

## Overall Impressions

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1. In your own words, describe the social issue or problem the piece is about:

- Who should the burden of stormwater taxes should fall upon?
- the local government wants to tax the petroleum and agricultural industries to help raise revenue to clean up storm water.
- There is a need to raise money for remediation of stormwater runoff contamination problems.
- raise taxes to help clean up stormwater damage.
- effect of raising taxes to fix a system that could be paid for other wise.
- Stormwater contamination is occurring and a program of stormwater cleanup projects is being developed. Costs of the program are proposed to be borne by two industries that are seen as the predominant contributors - petroleum products and the agricultural industry.
- Whether or not to tax local industry (agriculture and petroleum) to deal with stormwater issues.  
Stormwater drainoff or runoff.
- Storm water contamination by the petroleum and agriculture industries.
- Stormwater contamination clean up. The local government is trying to levy a tax/fee to agriculture and petroleum businesses to fund a stormwater contamination cleanup fund.
- Industry doesn't want to be taxed at the expense of all the residents.  
the government is trying to raise money by taxing industries to fund stormwater cleanup projects.
- The problem is contaminated water and find a solution(s) to clean it and keep it clean.  
The article is stating that the petroleum and agricultural industries are mostly responsible for this problem.
- The social issue is adding extra tax which can only hurt those who already have enough burden of not making it through. They feel the government should step in and pay instead of taxing everyone.
- How does stormwater treatment get paid for.
- There are issues with storm water runoff in this community.
- polluted stormwater which ends up in the water supply.
- this is about a proposed fee or tax on the agricultural and petroleum industries in this area. It is to help combat pollution from their industries.
- There was a stormwater tax that the government is trying to call a fee and people don't want to pay.
- The problem that the piece describes is the funding for stormwater clean-up in the region.
- There is a proposal for a new stormwater fee to be imposed on certain industries to fund stormwater clean-up projects.
- The discussion on rather a new tax should go into effect, or even if it should be called a tax in the first place, which offers to help stormwater contamination.

- This piece argues the terminology between "fee" and "tax" and says that the government cannot tax companies during such a time of recession.
- stormwater clean up and who will pay for it.
- The local government is proposing a "fee" to fund storm water collections, even though it was voted down in prior elections. This time they are calling it a "fee" instead of a "tax", so they can get around the required 2/3 majority it needs to be passed.

2. In your own words, how does the local government or water utility plan to solve this issue or problem?

- Businesses will pay the cost therefore passing the expenses along to the people by raising prices and cutting jobs.
- raise revenue by charging a fee/tax on the two industries to clean up storm water.
- The exact remedies are not addressed in this article, other than to say that a new regulatory agency would be created to oversee remediation.
- raise taxes to pay for more help and research to prevent the damage caused by the rotting plants and germs in water.
- raise taxes 1%
- A stormwater clean-up tax is proposed to be imposed on the petroleum and agricultural industries in this town. It is projected to raise \$100 million annually. It is an issue that was raised for the last several years and opponents feel it is an effort to slightly change the language of the issue (tax vs. fee) and slide through a new tax.
- Assess a fee to these two industries to regulate stormwater contamination.
- impose a tax on business and the community
- By establishing storm water treatment facilities.
- They want to levy a flat 1% fee/tax on these businesses to raise approximately \$100 million to clean up stormwater contamination. They had originally assessed businesses at the first purchase of the business a fee for contamination, but since the government spent this money elsewhere, they needed additional cash flows.
- collect "fees" as opposed to tax.
- they plan to fund projects to clean up the polluted water caused by societal problems.
- They are to be taxed higher than before, and the money generated will be used to clean the water system.
- The situation will be solved if they had government paying some of the problems instead of the constant taxing it adds to society.
- regulate sources of stormwater contamination.
- The want to charge a "fee" to help clean up the runoff.
- cleaning up stormwater.
- by making these industries pay a fee to be used to help combat the pollution that comes from their industries.
- By implementing a stormwater fee.
- The piece does not go into any detail on how the government intends to solve the problem.
- After having a stormwater tax defeated at the polls, a new proposal calls for a stormwater fee in hopes of bypassing the 2/3 vote needed to pass new taxes.

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- They would like to initiate a new tax.
- They plan to add a 1% fee to the industry, however, the fee will not go toward solving the issue. It didn't really say how the local government was going to solve the storm water issue.  
by adding a fee to 2 industries.
- They want to add a "fee" to certain services, even though they had enough money in their coffers to fund what they want -- they just diverted the money to other, not-as-important endeavors.

3. In your own words, how does the local government or water utility want to pay for its work on this issue or problem?

- By developing a new Department to collect the money instead of using the Department of Revenue which would indicate to the people that it is a tax collection system.
- to add a fee/tax to the petroleum and agricultural industries.
- The local government wants to raise the money by imposing a "fee" on the agricultural and petroleum industries only.
- raise taxes
- target 2 industries and the increase will hurt lower class.
- Through a tax/fee on the agricultural and petroleum industries.
- By assessing a fee to these two industries.
- Have the community pay for it by raising taxes.
- By imposing a "first-use" fee on these industries.
- They want to levy a flat 1% fee/tax on these businesses to raise approximately \$100 million to clean up stormwater contamination. Not quite sure what the difference is between questions 2 & 3.
- by using the term 'fees' they expect to gain the revenue they need for the sewage issues.
- they want to tax the agricultural and petroleum industries.
- The local government and water utility wants the industries of agriculture and petroleum to get increased taxes put upon them to pay for the problem.
- The government expects taxes to be imposed on its citizens. They are benefitting not the citizens
- tax 2 industries.
- The will charge a fee to the agricultural and petroleum industries.  
instituting a tax that targets the petroleum and agricultural industries.
- by making the agricultural and petroleum companies pay a tax or a fee-depending on how you look at it.
- By imposing a tax.
- The government plans to pass a bill in the legislature to add a fee/tax on the agricultural and petroleum industries.
- It plans to impose additional fees on two industries, petroleum and agriculture.
- By creating a "fee". which is actually a tax, just worded differently to avoid regulations.
- Tax payer money will be taken in order to pay for the work.
- by taxing only the agri. and petroleum industries.

- They want to increase taxes, but they know that people won't go for that (as it has been voted down multiple times), so they want to increase "fees" (which is a loophole-based way of saying "taxes") on other services.

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## Program Impressions

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The government will collect the money fairly	19.2 %	42.3 %	15.3 %	19.2 %	3.8 %
The government will spend the money wisely	30.7 %	38.4 %	7.6 %	15.3 %	7.6 %
This program will make a positive difference for the community	7.6 %	26.9 %	23.0 %	30.7 %	11.5 %

In your own words, please elaborate on your answer to the last statement about "making a difference."

- While some of the problem will be taken care of the root of the issue is that the full amount of money that could be utilized towards this project will be diverted elsewhere.
- I think this will make a positive difference because the revenue is going toward a good cause.
- The remediation steps are not identified, only the issue of raising the money for solving the problem.
- Help clean up the community and take care of the mess.
- taxing right now kills the working person.
- the stormwater cleanup projects will very likely create jobs and also lead to a cleaner environment.
- The real question is how it will be paid for.
- It will not make a difference because if the govt. collects this fee, the money will not go to the purpose for which it was intended.
- The money most likely will be siphoned off towards other programs.
- Puget sound is increasingly polluted by stormwater runoff-fertilizer contamination, for example, promotes algae blooms which deplete oxygen and kill fish.
- If the environmental clean up is done, then the health risks involved with the stormwater contamination, then the cost of \$.03 was worth it.
- its starts with making a decision than acting upon it and a difference will ensue.
- They will clean up the stormwater pollution, so that will make the community cleaner and safer.
- Working toward cleaning the water system and keeping it clean is better than doing nothing at all, so I somewhat agree that it will make a difference.
- The program will make a difference if the government helps not expect that the program is done on its own.
- the stormwater contamination will probably be lessened if they go thru with proposed plans, although there were no specifics as to what the plan was.

- Pollution is not helpful to the survival of the human species. Helping to clean the storm water run off will make the community safer for humans and other species.
- cleaning up polluted stormwater which drains into rivers, streams, etc.
- these are highly polluting industries and I think they should pay accordingly and not make idle threats.
- I think the government will try to fix a problem if it's inefficient, but it doesn't necessarily equate to a positive difference.
- I somewhat disagree that the proposal will make a positive difference based on what has happened to other revenue allocated to the problem.
- Governments are notorious for collecting fees and taxes for one thing and then arbitrarily using them for something else. Certainly it could make a positive difference, but it depends on how the government actually decides to use the money.
- Even though it is a tax, it probably would have a positive effect on the community. Overall it probably, if spent well, would help eliminate the problem.
- The community will suffer because of this action, placing more tax and regulation on businesses right now forces them to cut corners or downsize in order to comply.
- the gov. will misuse this money as it does all monies collected from citizens and companies.
- It depends on how the money is spent. Looking at the government's track record on this issue, whose to say they won't just use these supposedly earmarked funds for other purposes?

## Swap the Shoptalk

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The piece has a clear message	3.8 %	11.5 %	11.5 %	38.4 %	34.6 %
I could explain this piece to others without showing it to them	7.6 %	7.6 %	19.2 %	46.1 %	19.2 %
The piece was prepared with the general public in mind	4.1 %	50.0 %	12.5 %	25.0 %	8.3 %

In your own words, how would you describe the audience this piece is intended for?

- Its not designed in such a simple way that you can just read it once and understand the issue. I needed to refer back to the piece several times to make sure I was getting my facts straight. Could certainly be simplified.
- I would describe them as average and concerned about new taxes in a bad economy.
- The audience is the members of the community for whom this proposal is written.
- lower class working Americans.
- The article was intended to influence the general public.
- This was intended for libertarians and Tea Party supporters who have a purist view of tax assessment.
- The people this would appeal to are environmentalists.
- Rural voters, primarily living in eastern Washington.
- I would say this piece was destined for the petroleum and farmers to rile them up to fight against this new fee/tax.
- general local voters.
- It is intended to inform people of the unfair taxation of the agricultural and petroleum industries, and to gain awareness.
- It was written to appeal mostly to the public sector and but not to farmers or people in the petroleum industries.
- The piece was to notify the general public.
- directed at those who are anti-tax to start with.
- This piece is meant to be understood by the average person in the community to which it applies.
- voters, especially those distrustful of government spending.
- I'd say it's intended for people or companies that are against taxes, and specifically those in the industries affected by this proposed fee.
- I think the audience is meant for people who keep up with issues like this, people who go to city council meetings.

- I believe the piece was focused on people who already share the opinion.
- I'm not sure. It seems to be targeted to voters, but it almost reads more like the goal is to challenge the language of the proposal rather than to defeat the proposal. It doesn't really say what people who agree with the position presented should do, vote against the proposal in the election, sign a petition to have the proposal removed or what.
- People who are interested in local health affairs, and also interested in news the local government.
- I think this piece was developed for the industries that it will be affecting. Words that have such conviction only come from affected individuals. No one cares about things that dont affect them directly.
- the common citizen.
- It seems to be intended for people who already have an idea about how local government works. If you don't at least have an understanding of governmental policy and procedure it would probably be hard to understand.

## Insert the Words That Work

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The issue is important to society	<u>3.8 %</u>	<u>3.8 %</u>	<u>30.7 %</u>	<u>34.6 %</u>	<u>26.9 %</u>
It is urgent to address this issue now	<u>3.8 %</u>	<u>23.0 %</u>	<u>34.6 %</u>	<u>15.3 %</u>	<u>23.0 %</u>
Issues like this affect me or my family	<u>7.6 %</u>	<u>15.3 %</u>	<u>15.3 %</u>	<u>26.9 %</u>	<u>34.6 %</u>

In your own words, please elaborate on your answer to the last statement, "issues like this affect me or my family."

- All issues that effect tax rates, and how tax dollars are spent effect any working member of society.
- Even if only businesses are directly effected tax payers suffer indirectly.
- issues similar to this can effect my family either directly or indirectly, weather we get directly taxed or weather prices rise because industry gets taxed
- If higher fees are charged to the petroleum and agricultural industries, it will serve to raise the prices of the food and gas I need to buy.
- It does because I live in Florida and this is a common issue.
- taxation takes money out of my pocket that needed for other things.
- Stormwater cleanup is essential for the protection of our water resources. The degradation of our water resources - and the cost incurred to clean it up - impacts all of us.
- Stormwater contamination needs to addressed, but fairly. It doesn't affect me directly because I live on a large piece of property in a rural area.
- Water pollution can greatly affect the safety of my family.
- There is a shellfish ban in effect right now affecting a beach one mile from my house, because of toxic algae.
- This is unlikely to effect me as we live in a very rural area and do not have any farming or petroleum factories nearby. Also, we do not drive very much, so an increase of \$.03 is inconsequential and petrol prices around the globe are more than double the current rate.
- sewage is something very close to all of lives after all poor sewage is blamed for the black death in 1200's.
- I never really came into contact with stormwater pollution, so it doesnt really affect me.

- We must as human beings have clean water to use and drink daily. The population is growing every year, and we must take measures to preventing contamination of our water upstream and in general.
- Everything affects families when taxes or programs are brought to society.
- stormwater contamination, at some point, can affect anyone. the way we pay for these projects affect us all.
- Pollution affects humans in a variety of ways. It reduces the quality of our available food supply and makes our environments less safe to live in.
- pollution that gets into the water sauce can have long term health effects we don't know about.
- Pollution affects me, my family, everyone, and people and industries who create a lot of pollution but do nothing to lower their environmental impact should be made to pay for the cleanup through other means.
- I couldn't really relate to the issue at all, I'd never been concerned about that sort of thing before.
- The treatment of wastewater affects everybody in the community.
- I'm not very familiar with the issue of stormwater cleanup. It seems a little more time and space should have been spent on explaining the issue rather that just railing against the proposal.
- It feels like this is a local article, only relevant to the specific area it is intended for. Unlikely to affect my own family.
- I dont have any issues like this affecting my family at the moment. This doesnt mean that it wont in the future though. government has a funny way of slipping the citizens a fast one.
- rising taxes, even on industries, affects all of us.
- If taxes (no matter what they are labeled) go up, everyone who pays is effected. It's even worse when you have to pay more money for something that you don't really understand, such as storm water collection? I hear about it all the time, but I don't get what the need is.

## Parting Thoughts

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In your own words, please share any parting thoughts you have for the organization that produced this piece. Remember, your identity is confidential.

- My thoughts are somewhat angry, if the money had been saved and spent how it was supposed to be spent we wouldn't be in this dilemma know.
- this seems to be a common problem now a days.
- One of the problems with the issue is that the petroleum industry does make a tidy profit, and should be contributing to the remedies. However, it should be taken out in taxes the corporation pays on its profits rather than imposing a new surtax on its customers. One of the other problems that really hits home is that fact that many monies are so mismanaged by the government.

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- We have been through so many hurricanes over the last 7 years in florida. We without electricity for two weeks at one point. It was horrible.
- this needs voted down badly.
- I found some of the arguments against the fee persuasive - especially the concern that the tax was to be absorbed by a limited segment of industry when many more factors are involved besides agriculture and petroleum issues.
- It's a well-written document and strikes at the heart of what the Tea Party movement is all about.
- The issue has merit but the way the government wants tot raise the money is unfair to the majority.
- I think t was too much text and I think that the company's lobbying will fall on deaf hears regarding tax increases or "fees".
- I believe that we are on the edge of castrophe based on my recent experience with the BP Oil Spill and living on the coast. It doesn't take but an instant of neglect and we could lose valuable resources that we take for granted everyday. Even though the BP Oil spill is out of the news now, we are still affected and will be for the next 100 years. It was and is a tragedy. If we don't monitor our water supplies, the very water that will sustain us and keep us happy, we will be in a serious crises. I think that keeping our water clean and safe is of the utmost importance.
- interesting facts.
- well presented, but I prefer articles that show both sides of picture equally objectively.
- It was a convincing piece, but I don't know the other side of the story.
- none
- This is a thinly veiled threat, in my opinion, basically saying they will put people out of their jobs in order to be able to comply with this fee.
- It was a bit hard to follow and was somewhat boring.
- The piece seemed to lack a lot of facts for a fact sheet.
- I don't find this particularly effective. If it is looking to defeat the proposal at the polls it doesn't even state whether it wants people to vote yes or no. The position is clearly against the fee but it seems to me that sometimes with legislative language you still need to make it clear how people who agree with this position should vote. Sometimes the proposal language can be misleading. I also find much of the argument confusing, unconvincing, and with no supporting citations. For instance the claim that \$250 million was "raided" from the MCTA fund or tens of million used on organic composting programs.
- Where is the reference to supporting documentation on these and other facts?
- While I think the words were written by a person that is directly affected by the tax, government too could really use an honesty pill. they tend to word things to make them seem less abrasive, all the while doing what they want.
- gov. is always thinking of ways to spend taxpayers money. there is never enough.
- It was pretty interesting. It actually sounds a lot like the way they do things in my city/ county. It also reinforced the idea that I need to look into what the big deal is with storm water collection, because it's in the news here every so often and I never take the time to really find out what it is about.

## About the Due Diligence Test Panel

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Just whose opinions are these, anyway? The "Due Diligence Test Panel" is a standing body of U.S. residents who provide feedback on marketing materials and perform related tasks in return for payment.

A major corporation recruits the board members, maintains the feedback system, and acts as a financial middleman. Water Words That Work, LLC has devised this questionnaire and subscribes to the service, as do other marketing firms.

The feedback that you receive from the test panel is free of the biases that skew the feedback you get from your peers:

- Test panel members have the perspective of taxpayers and voters "in the wild." They are not professionals in the field.
- Test panel members have not participated in the drafting of the materials.
- Test panel members' feedback is not influenced by their personal relationship with you.
- The test panel more closely approximates the demographic makeup of U.S. taxpayers and voters than the staff of your organization.

Demographic Trait	Environmental Professionals	Due Diligence Test Panel	Traditional Telephone Poll, U.S. Sample	Actual U.S. (Census)
4 Year College Degree	95% or higher	~50%	~40%	27%
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## **A STORMWATER TAX IS A BAD IDEA IN 2011** **JUST LIKE IT WAS IN 2010 ... AND 2009**

Proponents are back with yet another proposal (HB 1735 / SB 5604) to tax some industries to fund stormwater clean-up projects. This year's version targets the agricultural and petroleum industries. Other than that, it's just more of the same. Let's take a closer look.

### **A tax by any other name is still a tax**

The Department of Revenue defines a tax as a measure levied for the purpose of raising revenue for a general government purpose. In contrast, a fee is imposed for the purpose of regulating a specific activity and covering the cost of providing that regulation. Under this definition, this year's proposal is once again clearly a tax. Further evidence comes from comparing it to last year's tax proposal – little has changed.

<b>Last year's "tax"</b>	<b>This year's "fee"</b>
Imposed on the basis of value of the product at time of first possession in the state.	Imposed on the basis of value of the product at time of first possession in the state.
Specifies which products and industries pay.	Specifies which products and industries pay.
Would not fund any regulatory activity related to the impacted products.	Would not fund any regulatory activity related to the impacted products.
Revenues directed to funding societal good of stormwater clean up.	Revenues directed to funding societal good of stormwater clean up.
Proposed rate varied from 0.7% increase to 1.5% increase.	Proposed rate would be 1%, consistent with last year's proposed tax rates.

If the intention is to provide some new regulation of stormwater, why are the other major sources of stormwater contamination not included? And do we really think that voters intended to allow \$100 million in new costs to be imposed without the 2/3 majority vote required when the voters of the state passed Initiative 1053 in November of 2010?

### **Now is NOT the time to increase costs and lose jobs!**

Businesses can only deal with increased costs by passing them along to their customers or by absorbing them into their operations, which impairs their ability to create jobs and hire people. For some businesses, like farmers whose crop prices are set by larger market forces, scaling back operations and cutting jobs may be the only response available to them. There is no fiscal note on this bill yet, but proponents claim it will raise \$100 million annually. As the equivalent cost impact as a three-cent-per-gallon gas tax, it's reasonable to expect that this will have an adverse impact on the price of fuel and then a ripple effect throughout the economy. With Washington businesses and families still struggling to cope with the recession, now is not the time to impose additional costs on them.

## **The Legislature has diverted \$250 million in taxes that should have gone to these projects**

Agricultural and petroleum products are already taxed at the time of first possession under the state's Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). Created by voter initiative two decades ago, MTCA generates hundreds of millions of dollars for environmental projects annually. The real problem is that the MTCA account has been raided to the tune of \$250 million over the last few years. Voters intended that money to go to environmental projects like stormwater clean up. If the Governor and Legislature hadn't raided the MTCA account, money would be available for these projects. It's not right to divert a tax and then force two industries to pay additional taxes to make up for it!

## **This proposal ignores the message voters sent in November**

In addition to using the word "fee" in an attempt to circumvent the voters' requirement of a 2/3 majority to impose new taxes, this proposal flies in the face of other messages sent in November. The public wants state government to prioritize and deliver services as efficiently as possible. But this proposal would raise taxes to fund what proponents call their #1 priority, while allowing tens of millions of MTCA dollars to be spent on other uses, like promoting organic composting. And it would require the Department of Ecology to establish a duplicative and expensive new bureaucracy to administer and collect this new "fee," just because using the existing Department of Revenue collection system would underscore that it is indeed a tax.

## **It is unfair to single out two industries to pay for a societal problem**

The agricultural and petroleum industries already are paying their fair share for these types of projects through the existing MTCA tax. Stormwater contamination is a societal problem caused by everything from pet excrement to rotting organic plant material. Imposing the entire cost burden on just two industries might help reduce the potential sources of opposition to the bill – but not the potential sources of pollution.

