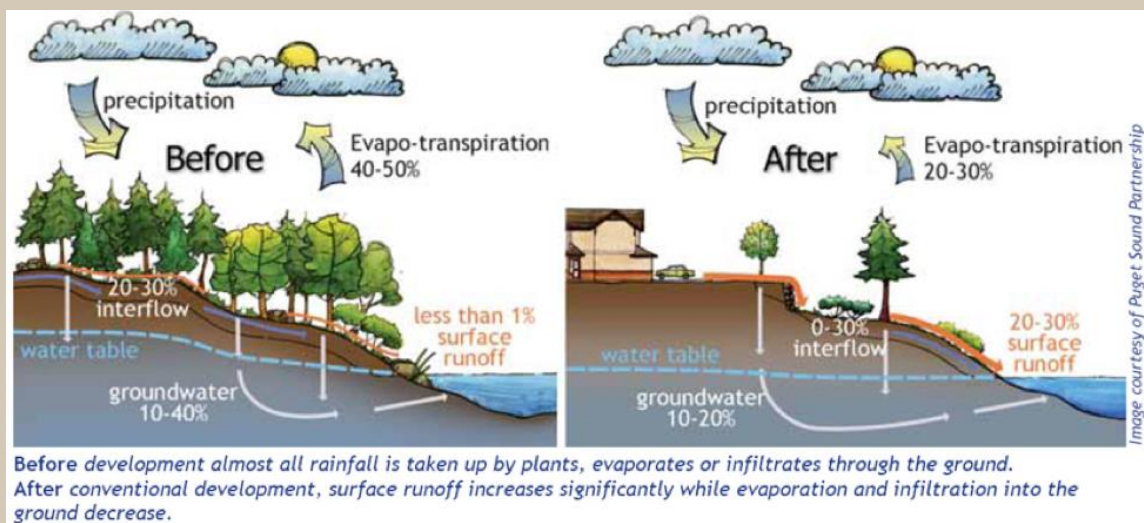




Public Works Stormwater Department

What is Stormwater?

Stormwater runoff occurs when precipitation from rain or snowmelt flows over the ground or other surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, and streets, and into the stormwater system or surface water. As this water flows over surfaces, it can pick up contaminants such as sediment, oils, fertilizers and pesticides, pet waste, and more. While some precipitation that falls in Ferndale evaporates or soaks into the ground, most eventually ends up in one of our many streams or the Nooksack River. Much of the stormwater in Ferndale flows directly into streams and other surface waters without treatment. Stormwater is considered non-point source pollution, and discharge from the City system to waters of the state is prohibited by the Clean Water Act without a permit.





Public Works Stormwater Department

How Does the City Manage Storm and Surface Water?

The Public Works Stormwater Department is responsible for the City's stormwater utility, including maintenance and repair of stormwater facilities and conveyance systems, planning for expansion of the existing system, investigation and resolution of drainage complaints, flood control, and implementation of the Department of Ecology Western Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit.

The City's Stormwater Department coordinates the Stormwater Management Program to meet the requirements of the Western Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit, which is issued by the Washington State Department of Ecology to meet the requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). The Stormwater Management Program includes:

- Stormwater Planning
- Public Education and Outreach
- Public Involvement and Participation
- Stormwater Mapping and Documentation
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
- Controlling Runoff from New Development, Redevelopment and Construction Sites
- Municipal Operations and Maintenance
- Source Control

The City of Ferndale is also required to fund water quality monitoring, and implement Nooksack River Watershed Bacteria Total Maximum Daily Load basin plan requirements to reduce fecal coliform bacteria in stormwater runoff and surface waters.

Who Pays for Stormwater Management?

Storm drainage fees are collected from utility bills and development fees and deposited into the Storm and Flood Control Fund. The City of Ferndale has established the fund to account for improvements to the City's storm drainage system and flood control mechanics. Stormwater needs are city-wide and benefit all citizens of Ferndale. This includes ongoing expenses to maintain and improve the stormwater system, flood prevention projects and flood fight activities, operations and maintenance such as catch basin cleaning and street sweeping, staff, administration and equipment, and municipal permit requirements such as the Stormwater Management Program to protect and improve water quality.



Public Works Stormwater Department

What are Stormwater Management Facilities?

Stormwater facilities are any constructed component of a stormwater drainage system. This includes catch basins, pipes, ditches, culverts, and ponds. Flow control facilities such as ponds and vaults are designed to detain water and release it at a pre-developed rate to protect downstream properties and receiving waters from flooding and erosion. Treatment facilities address pollutants such as sediment and metals, hydrocarbons (oils), and/or minerals like phosphorous. Stormwater treatment does not treat water for pathogens from things like sewage and pet waste, nor does it remove chemical such as paint, pesticides, antifreeze, or other pollutants. These pollutants must be prevented from entering the stormwater system to protect surface and ground water quality. The use of Low Impact Design (LID) emphasizes site planning to minimize impervious surfaces, native vegetation loss, and stormwater runoff. Onsite stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) such as permeable pavement, rain gardens, and dispersion mimic natural site conditions such as infiltration, storage, evaporation, and transpiration.

Our subdivision has its own stormwater pond that is privately maintained by the Homeowner's Association. Am I also required to pay the stormwater utility fee?

Yes. Stormwater facilities like ponds were installed to serve the development, and responsibility for operation and maintenance of these facilities was assigned at time of development. The City stormwater utility fees pay for City-wide stormwater and flood obligations. City staff can help provide guidance to owners of stormwater facilities to help understand where to get started with stormwater maintenance. Contact the Public Works Stormwater Department for more information.

I don't live in the Ferndale City limits, but I pay a City of Ferndale utility bill. Will I be assessed the monthly fee?

No. Because stormwater utility services are not provided outside of City limits, stormwater fees are not charged to utility customers outside of City limits.

Since I pay stormwater fees, will the City install drainage for my property that has seasonal flooding?

No. The City is responsible for storm facilities wholly within the City right-of-way or within drainage easements in favor of the City including; stormwater pipes, ditches, streams, detention facilities, control structures, and pumping facilities. Stormwater issues on private property are the responsibility of the property owner.