

# CLERMONT COUNTY **Stormwater Utility Districts:**

A Public Resource Guide for Homeowners

**A Stormwater Utility District transfers responsibility for the maintenance of stormwater infrastructure on your private property to the Clermont County Engineer.**

**Learn how this funding solution could protect you and your neighbors from unexpected and costly repairs.**



# What is stormwater?

Stormwater results from precipitation. It is the water that falls to the earth each time it rains or snows. Stormwater is different from wastewater, which flows into a separate drainage system.

## Where does stormwater go?

In nature, stormwater soaks naturally back into the ground or flows gradually into nearby water sources. But in housing subdivisions or other developed areas, rooftops, roads and sidewalks all prevent water from being absorbed and can cause it to run off at a much faster rate. Without intervention, this water would pool on streets and in basements. Instead, a network of pipes, drains and catch basins directs stormwater to collection systems that eventually flow into local rivers, streams and lakes.

## When is stormwater collection a problem?

Over time, old stormwater pipes can crack or even collapse. At your own home, you first may notice standing water in your yard for an especially long period of time after heavy rain. You could even start to see a sinkhole develop. Correcting these problems quickly is important to prevent flooding that threatens public health and safety, and to maintaining the property value of your home.

## Who is responsible for maintaining stormwater systems?

Stormwater infrastructure that is located on private property is the responsibility of the individual private property owner. Individual homeowners are required to maintain the pipes and other stormwater infrastructure underneath their driveways and yards. Stormwater pipes that are located within the public right of way are the responsibility of the county, or in some instances the township.

No property owner wants the unwelcome surprise of finding out that their stormwater pipes need to be fixed. The news can come with a price tag of thousands or even tens of thousands of dollars, depending upon the amount of infrastructure located on your property and the number of repairs needed.

## Can the county take over responsibility for the maintenance of private stormwater infrastructure?

Yes. State law allows the Board of County Commissioners to establish Stormwater Utility Districts. These districts establish the Clermont County Engineer as the responsible party for the upkeep of stormwater infrastructure, even when it is located on private property.

## What is a Stormwater Utility District?

A Stormwater Utility District creates an agreement between you, the residents of your subdivision and the county to transfer responsibility for the inspection, maintenance and repair of stormwater infrastructure located on private property to the Clermont County Engineer. The related service costs are shared equally among all homeowners within the Stormwater Utility District.

## What are the benefits of a Stormwater Utility District?

A Stormwater Utility District acts like an insurance policy that guarantees you're not individually responsible for high out-of-pocket costs if stormwater infrastructure on your property fails.

## Who pays for the expenses of a Stormwater Utility District?

The cost of a Stormwater Utility District is shared equally by all homeowners in the district and collected as an additional fee on your bi-monthly bill from the Clermont County Water and Sewer Department. Money that is collected can only be used for expenses within your specific Stormwater Utility District. It cannot be spent on any other county project or for stormwater repairs in any other district.

## What is the average fee per homeowner?

While every Stormwater Utility District is different, the monthly cost averages between \$10 and \$15 per property owner. This is not a one-time charge but instead is an ongoing fee applied to every residential lot within the boundary of the Stormwater Utility District.

## Will the fee change over time?

Fees are evaluated and adjusted (increased or decreased) every five years, as necessary.

# How to Establish a Stormwater Utility District in Your Subdivision

Property owners interested in joining together to create a Stormwater Utility District must petition the Board of Clermont County Commissioners:

# 1

### Talk to your neighbors.

You'll need agreement from the majority of them to sign a petition requesting the creation of a Stormwater Utility District.

# 2

### Submit your petition.

Once the petition is submitted, the Clermont County Engineer will conduct an assessment to determine the condition of the entire stormwater infrastructure system in your subdivision.

# 3

### Review the proposal.

Following the assessment, the engineer will create a proposal estimating the cost for ongoing maintenance and repairs of your subdivision's stormwater infrastructure.

# 4

### Attend a public meeting.

County commissioners will notify all homeowners in the subdivision about the petition and hold a public meeting. During the meeting, residents can ask questions, voice concerns and give their support or opposition to the petition.

**After considering recommendations from the engineer and input from the public, the commissioners will vote to approve or deny the petition. If approved, a Stormwater Utility District is formed, and infrastructure maintenance is shifted to the county.**

## LEARN MORE

For more information about establishing a Stormwater Utility District in your neighborhood, contact the Clermont County Engineer's Office at 513-732-8857 or visit [ClermontEngineer.org](http://ClermontEngineer.org).