

CITY OF ANN ARBOR

STORMWATER IMAGERY UPDATE FAQs

Ann Arbor has had a stormwater utility since 1980 to make sure that all users of this stormwater system pay their fair share for the needed maintenance and system upgrades.

Ann Arbor has a rate system that charges customers based on impervious area, which was determined to be the best indicator of stormwater runoff. Measurement of impervious area is based on a computer analysis of aerial infrared photography. Using imagery collected in 2009, a new citywide stormwater analysis has been completed, and has affected stormwater charges in some cases. Prior to this update rates were based on imagery collected in 2006. Updated impervious area measurements and directions for providing feedback on areas that may have been incorrectly identified as impervious can be found at <http://www.a2gov.org> under My Property Information.

Q. Why conduct new analysis of impervious area?

New aerial imagery for impervious area analysis is collected every few years because we know that things change. As residents make home adjustments (e.g. a new garage, deck, home addition) total impervious area is increased and more stormwater runoff generated. Collecting new imagery and reevaluating the stormwater utility charges on a regular basis ensures that each property is responsible for paying a fee proportional to the stormwater runoff that they generate.

Q. How has the new imagery changed total impervious surface calculations?

Total impervious area calculations are now more accurate because the new imagery has been collected at a finer resolution, therefore providing a clearer image for interpretation. Previously, with less detailed imagery, impervious surfaces may have been obscured that are now visible and being accounted for.

Q. Why have I entered a higher tier of stormwater utility fee charges?

Single family residential parcels enter a higher tier of stormwater utility fees when their total impervious area exceeds the allowable amount for the lower tier. There are two main reasons this may have occurred:

- 1) Impervious area on the parcel has increased (e.g. a new garage or deck has been built) since the last imagery collection.
- 2) Some impervious area on the parcel was not accounted for in the older imagery and is now revealed with the newer, more detailed imagery.

Q. How have changes in impervious area been evaluated and verified?

The contractor hired to do the analysis conducted a detailed analysis between the new imagery and the previous data. Parcels showing a change in impervious area (either positive or negative) are individually reviewed by City staff to ensure the change is valid. The review utilizes Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software and differences between the old and new data were explored.

Q. Where can I find further information?

A more comprehensive FAQ list including information on stormwater management, utility fees, rate structure, impervious area, stormwater credits and more can be found at <http://www.a2gov.org/storm> under Stormwater Rates and Credits (Stormwater FAQ Fact Sheet link on right hand side of webpage).