

Task Force to Study Stormwater Issues

Online Survey Available Now to Gather Community Input

Last year, the City initiated a Comprehensive Stormwater Study, which covered the Cole, Boschert and Crystal Spring watersheds, and it was completed in the spring of this year. Moving forward with these initial study results, Mayor Faith subsequently implemented a Stormwater Task Force, which currently meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 5-6 p.m. at City Hall.

In addition to the Mayor, the task force includes several members of City Council, along with select members from the Board of Public Works, two appointed citizen representatives, and staff members from Administration and the Public Works department.

To date, the City has completed past stormwater management projects, including a flood-proofing project involving several homes in the southern reaches of Cole Creek. However, the comprehensive study now gives the new task force the necessary tools to prioritize projects based on project costs and damages prevented.

Beyond prioritizing stormwater projects, the task force is charged with:

- Recommending resources and funding for stormwater improvements,
- Recommending new stormwater policies, and
- Directing a program to educate the public on the importance of stormwater management and flood risk prevention.

“We hope residents will participate in an online survey, which started in October,” said Kevin Corwin, City Engineer, “as well as a citywide survey scheduled for distribution during the first quarter of 2016. These survey efforts will afford the City an opportunity to obtain feedback on a number of issues, including stormwater,” he said.

The online survey can be easily accessed from the home page of the City’s website at www.stcharlescitymo.gov. “Many thanks for taking the time to participate in the online option prior to December 1, as we’ll continue to provide feedback as we move forward,” Kevin added.

Councilmember Bridget Ohmes, Ward 10, underscored the importance of studying this issue now, and having the proper planning in place to determine next steps and the potential funding process. “It’s important for the City to stay ahead of the curve and have our ideas and strategies firmly in place and ready to go when the timing is right to move forward with this important initiative,” she said.

If you have questions or concerns about stormwater in the City, please contact the Department of Public Works at 636-949-3237.

What is Stormwater Runoff?

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, **stormwater runoff** is generated when precipitation from rain and melting snow flows over land or impervious surfaces and does not percolate into the ground.

Here in Missouri, it’s mostly about rain, and in some cases, lots of it! *Impervious* is a fancy word for a ground surface that is no longer able to soak in rain or runoff. When rainwater is falling on or flowing over impervious surfaces, there’s more of it—and the water moves faster. Therefore, it can pick up debris and pollutants along the way.

Even if your property is at the highest point of the City, it is your ground surface that contributes to properties in lower points of the City, especially those that experience flooding. We all share in the stormwater outcomes.

What are the Consequences of Stormwater Flooding?

Our City sustains various damage from stormwater flooding including:

- Flooding of roadways, real estate/ property and homes
- Erosion – loss of usable yard, threat to homes and/or property
- Degraded water quality
- Siltation and sedimentation downstream

The City of St. Charles in tandem with our Stormwater Task Force seeks to provide comprehensive management of the stormwater drainage system to protect our community and environment.

How Does Yard Waste Contribute to Stormwater Flooding?

Yard waste deposited on any street or sidewalk is prohibited within the City and is considered a nuisance (ordinance §220.020.A7). Yard waste blocks the drainage system and kills stream bank vegetation, which can lead to localized flooding and more erosion. Leaves, grass clippings and other yard waste (depending on the type) should be composted, left on your lawn, or placed in acceptable containers for curbside pick-up.

Here are some more ways you can manage your yard waste while combating stormwater flooding:

- **Clean Sweep** – Sweep up yard debris from streets and sidewalks instead of letting it wash away. Leaves and grass clippings left on streets and sidewalks will enter our creeks.
- **No Dumping** – Never dump grass clippings and other yard waste into storm drains or near creek or stream banks.
- **Skip the Bag** – Let grass clippings drop to the lawn. Leaving grass clippings on the lawn throughout spring, summer and fall is equivalent to one application of fertilizer.
- **Bundle Up** – Branches may be bundled in four-foot lengths and left for curbside pick-up by Republic Services (call 636-255-6142 for more information).
- **Make a Plan** – Be smart with your lawn care. Even if you use a professional service, it’s still up to you to make sure they don’t contribute to the stormwater pollution problem. It’s always a good idea to talk it over, just to be sure.