



Gwinnett County Government  
75 Langley Drive  
Lawrenceville, GA 30045

## NEWS RELEASE

Charles E. Bannister, Chairman

Heather Sawyer  
Media Relations and Publications  
Manager  
Phone: 770.822.7035  
Fax: 770.822.7189

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**Story Contact:** Frank Stephens  
Department of Water Resources  
678.376.7133

### **STORMWATER UTILITY: A NEW BILL THIS YEAR**

(Lawrenceville, Ga., Aug. 11, 2006) – When Gwinnett County formed a new stormwater utility back in January, officials announced that a new fee for stormwater management would be included on the County property tax bills that went out this week. The median residential bill for 2006 is \$21.56. Half of single-family homes will pay less.

Gwinnett County uses aerial photography to determine the amount of impervious surface, such as roofs and driveways, on each parcel of property, including homes, businesses, schools and churches. Impervious surfaces prevent water from being absorbed into the ground, thus producing extra runoff during storms. The extra runoff creates a need for drainage facilities and pollution controls to reduce erosion and protect water quality in streams. Every single roof and driveway contributes to the extra runoff.

“The County has a large backlog of drainage projects necessary to prevent flooding of buildings and roads,” according to Bryan Lackey of the County’s Stormwater Management division. “This fee will help us maintain the facilities needed to meet current clean water regulations.”

Starting last February, several public meetings were held to explain the need for a stormwater fee. Answers to frequently asked questions have been posted online for months. More information on stormwater management, floodplains and watershed assessment is available online at [www.gwinnettstormwater.com](http://www.gwinnettstormwater.com).

There are more miles of stormwater pipe than either drinking water pipelines or sewers in Gwinnett County. The curb and yard inlets, detention

ponds, culverts, and pipes all need maintenance. This utility would be needed to maintain and improve existing

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drainage infrastructure even if construction came to a halt. It is important to fund the maintenance of this infrastructure, even though it is mostly underground and not visible.

The dedication of a revenue source will improve maintenance to critical drainage and environmental infrastructure. The benefits to residents include fewer sinkholes in yards and streets, speedier repairs to broken curb inlets and drainage headwalls, and reduction in the recurrence of flooding.

The benefits to our environmental quality of life include upgrades to existing detention ponds for water quality improvements, stream bank and wetlands restoration projects, and habitat enhancements.

The stormwater utility rate structure will create incentives for larger stream buffers and green space conservation in addition to the current 75-foot stream setback for impervious area. Also, credits will be given for septic tank maintenance.

Anyone who believes that the calculation of the impervious area on his or her parcel is incorrect should send an email to [swservice@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:swservice@gwinnettcounty.com) or write the Department of Water Resources, Stormwater Division, 684 Winder Highway, Lawrenceville, Ga. 30045, so that DWR can look up the parcel and respond accordingly.

Answers to questions or concerns can be found at [www.gwinnettstormwater.com](http://www.gwinnettstormwater.com) then click on Stormwater Utility. Anyone who has questions or concerns that are not answered or addressed on the website can email us at [swservice@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:swservice@gwinnettcounty.com).

We request that the phone lines be a last resort for communications because if too many people call at once, there is the possibility that the phone lines will overflow causing people to get a busy signal. Contacts by email or by letter correspondence also allows us to be responsive to folks outside of normal business hours.

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