

## **Stormwater Management Program**

Over the years the City of Prairie Village Public Works Department has provided stormwater maintenance and construction to facilitate the elimination of street flooding, yard flooding, and erosion into the channels and creeks. The costs have been funded with property taxes.

**What is stormwater?** It is the runoff of water that flows off the natural ground conditions and impervious cover during storm events. The flow comes from roofs, driveways, parking lots, streets, tennis courts, swimming pools and other non-absorbing surfaces. Rather than being absorbed into the ground, the untreated flows pour into ditches, culverts, storm pipes, street inlets, channels and creeks. In highly urbanized areas, such as our City, a majority of the rainfall becomes non-point source runoff creating problems of flooding, erosion, degraded stream quality and impact to human health and safety, the economy and environment.

**What is non-point source runoff?** Non-point source runoff is water pollution that is difficult to trace to a specific discharge source and hard to control. Examples of common non-point pollutants include fertilizers, pesticides, sediments, oils, trace metals, and litter. They come from lawns, roofs, automobiles, streets and construction sites.

**What is being done to address non-point stormwater pollution?** Non-point stormwater pollutions are being addressed in a number of Federal, state and local initiatives. A 1995 Federal law as part of the Clean Water Act requires local governments to enact various policies and programs to address flooding and urban run-off. Specifically, the City has to obtain an NPDES Phase II permit and submit a five year plan for compliance with the NPDES Measurable Goals and Best Management Practices (BMPs) in each of these stormwater program areas -Public Education and Outreach; Public Participation and Involvement; Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination; Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control; Post-Construction Stormwater Management; Pollution Prevention, Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operation; and any applicable TMDL supplemental conditions.

**Where does the City stand in addressing these issues?** The City will enact new Codes and regulations pertaining to drainage issues caused by historical development, aging infrastructure and the advent of new Federal and State regulations. Regrettably, the stormwater program must compete for general fund property tax revenue with other City services. Often times, the visibility and additional funding for stormwater programs only increase after major rain storms as it becomes a temporary priority.

**So, how do we pay for reducing non-point stormwater pollution and thus improving water quality?** The City Council is concerned about the fairness of using property valuation as means of funding stormwater work. Therefore in 2009, the City proposes that stormwater costs be funded through a stormwater fee assessment on each property. Several Johnson County communities (Fairway, Leawood, Lenexa, Mission, Olathe, Overland Park, Shawnee and Johnson County) have adopted a stormwater utility fee. This stormwater utility fee is based on the amount of impervious area on a property - a more equitable measurement. Some cities – Lenexa, Mission, Overland Park and Shawnee – receive monies from additional fund sources in addition to the stormwater utility fee. The City of Prairie Village will be implementing a stormwater utility fee calculated from the amount of impervious surface on all properties. This fee will be included on the property tax notice prepared by Johnson County. All maintenance, construction and administration costs will be supported by the stormwater utility fee.