

MS4 Misunderstandings and Myths: Moving toward effective stormwater management for small municipalities

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Introduction

- Small municipalities struggling with MS4 requirements.
- Managers commonly lack expertise and funding
- Costs to local communities are undesirable
- Numerous misunderstandings and myths developed in response to false perceptions of MS4 programs

Goals

1. Explain misunderstandings to facilitate enhanced understanding of regulation structure & options
2. Provide example frameworks
3. Develop formal guidance documents

Methods

- Literature review
- Interviews (managers, state agencies, consultants, etc.)
- Identify misunderstandings and realities (present on 5 primary here)



Calculate Non-Residential Fee Example:	
Building and parking lot impervious area	6,168 sq. ft.
1 billing unit	2,062 sq. ft.
Total billing units	$6,168 / 2,062 = 3$
Multiply by rate for 1 billing unit	$3 \times \$140$
Total fee	\$420/yr

Impervious Area = 6,168 sq. ft.



(1) “Unfunded Mandate”

(2) “Upstream Agriculture”



(3) “Only Downstream Benefits”

Misunderstandings hamper effective, efficient actions for small-municipality MS4s

(4) “Huge Projects”



(5) “Monitoring”



5 realities of misunderstandings

- 1) **No direct funding**
 - Grants are difficult
 - Taxes are unpopular
 - Stormwater utility may be best solution
- 2) **Other pollutant sources are addressed by separate regulations**
 - Need to demonstrate that urban stormwater is a real issue
 - Change perceptions
- 3) **Concrete local benefits**
 - Help replace aging infrastructure
 - Generates local stewardship
 - Increased ecosystem goods & services.
- 4) **Promising small source-control options**
 - Rain gardens/barrels, swales, etc.
 - Help demonstrate feasibility
- 5) **Monitoring ≠ reporting**
 - Can monitor & apply for additional credits if a good option
 - Address fear of “finding something wrong”

Example frameworks from the literature to discuss:

- Shepherd Creek, Cincinnati
- Cleveland, OH
- Little Stringybark Creek, Australia



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