

The City's Storm Water Utility was created in May 2008 to help pay for future infrastructure costs related to storm water, as well as fund the operations of the City's storm water management program. The City recently sent out storm water utility bills to residents and businesses. Here is some background and a few examples of where funds have been spent to provide a better understanding on the need for the utility fees:

- The City created the storm water utility fee as a more fair way of generating revenue, rather than through increased property taxes, where some institutions (i.e. public property, churches, etc.) would have been exempt from contributing toward increasing storm water needs and mandates.
- In updating the City's Comprehensive Plan, the City was required to prepare a Local Surface Water Management (LSWMP) Plan by the Metropolitan Council. The City used the storm water fees to prepare the plan. Fee revenue is also used to partially fund the personnel costs to manage the LSWMP.
- The City is required by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to implement best management practices for the City's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP) required annually to be maintained and reported.
- Fee revenues are being used as a City cost-share to receive grants for infrastructure projects. The Lake Independence Shoreline Restoration and Buffering Program benefited from a Board of Water and Soils Resources grant, which was matched with City storm water funds.
- Several of the bodies of water in Medina have been identified as "impaired" by the State of Minnesota in lieu of the Federal Clean Water Act standards. Area jurisdictions that are a part of these watersheds are required to improve the quality of the water bodies. To date, Total Maximum Daily Load's (TMDL's), which are required to be established and must identify the "total maximum daily load" the lake can handle from the negatively contributing source (i.e. phosphorous), have been or are being finalized for Lake Independence, Lake Sarah, and Elm Creek. The implementation plans created as part of establishing the TMDL identify timelines, responsibilities, and costs to improve the water quality of the water bodies. Therefore, Medina has been using storm water utility funds to provide water quality improvements and programs for the water bodies to meet compliance with the TMDL's.
- The City's geographic area is covered by three watershed districts, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed, Elm Creek Watershed, and Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed. The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District has its own taxing authority, while Elm Creek and Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed depend on dues and fees as a revenue source. The City uses the storm water utility revenues to pay for the annual watershed dues for Elm Creek and Pioneer-Sarah Creek.
- A few projects that the City has used storm water utility fees to support are City storm water pond dredging (near Tol-o-matic), annual street sweeping services, as well as Walnut Park and Lakeshore Avenue storm water collection improvements.