

## Resource Guide- how to enroll in BWSC's new credit

### Your Stormwater Charge

Currently, BWSC customers pay for stormwater service through their sewer service charges. Property owners in the BWSC service area will see a new line item on their BWSC bills for stormwater service beginning on April 1, 2024. The good news is that it will be accompanied by a reduction in the sewer charges.

The stormwater charge is based upon each property's **impervious area**. This includes hard surfaces such as pavement, concrete, structures, and compacted soil. Impervious areas can cause more runoff to flow from a property and increase the number of pollutants in stormwater.

The Equivalent Residential Unit (**ERU**) is the billing unit used for stormwater. One ERU represents the amount of impervious area on a typical small residential property in Boston.

Here are examples:



#### Small Residential Properties (SRP)

Properties with 1-6 residential units

Typical impervious area is 2,164 square feet, that's an **ERU**

Each property owner will be charged a single rate for **1 ERU**



#### Non-Small Residential Properties (NSRP)

All other properties including institutional, industrial, and commercial

Will be charged **per ERU of impervious area** measured on the property

To calculate the stormwater charge the impervious area is divided by 2,164 square feet

**Stormwater** is water that originates from precipitation events, such as rain or snow, and flows over land or impervious surfaces.



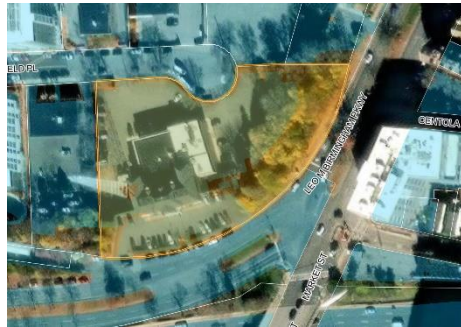
**Runoff** is water that flows over land or other surfaces and is not absorbed or infiltrated into the ground.



For more terms and definitions, please visit

<https://www.bwsc.org/news-and-events/news/stormwater>

**Example:**



66,684 sq ft of impervious area measured on a property  
 $66,684 \text{ sq ft} \div 2,164 \text{ sq ft} = 31.8$ , rounded up to **32 ERUs**

Should you have any questions about the stormwater charge or the Stormwater Charge Credit Program, please contact [stormwaterinfo@bwsc.org](mailto:stormwaterinfo@bwsc.org).

## How to Apply to the Stormwater Credit Program

**Credits** can be applied to reduce your stormwater service cost. The credit program recognizes property owners for taking actions on their property that reduce their demand on BWSC's stormwater system.

Credit program applications will be available on the BWSC website. BWSC encourages all stormwater customers to review the application and apply, if eligible.

Applicants may apply for multiple credits and receive a maximum **40%** credit off their stormwater charge.

The Boston and Water Sewer Commission reserves discretion with respect to the application of a credit to a parcel with multiple premises.



Pictured: Rain Garden in Boston

### **BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE CREDIT**

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are engineered systems that capture runoff and help reduce stormwater pollution. Customers can receive a **30%** credit off their stormwater charge for a demonstrated use of a Best Management Practice. BMPs described in the Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook that meet the BWSC minimum standards for retaining runoff at the time of BMP installation will be reviewed for a credit.

More information on BWSC standards for BMPs can be found at: <https://www.bwsc.org/builders-contractors/site-plan-requirements/storm-drain-requirements>

If your BMP was installed more than 5 years ago (earlier than April 1, 2019), a Professional Engineer, National Green Infrastructure Certified professional, or licensed Landscape Architect must certify that the system works as designed. Once certified, the credit is valid for **5 years** from the date of acceptance, at which time you must reapply and recertify for the credit.

If your BMP was installed within the last five years (after April 1, 2019), you will need to apply for the credit but will **NOT** need to certify the BMP. You will still need to reapply and recertify for the credit 5 years after installation.

If approved, applicants will receive a credit retroactive to the go-live date, April 1, 2024, or date of BMP installation, whichever is later (for any applications received in 2024).

To receive a credit, all applicants must agree to the following terms:

- Perform appropriate maintenance as needed so that the BMP continues to operate to meet the required standards
- Maintain a maintenance log, recording all work performed on the BMP.  
*A maintenance log will be provided by BWSC.* Agree to random inspections by BWSC or its designated consultant

Upon inspection, should any BMP fail to meet the required standards, BWSC will remove the stormwater charge credit for that property. The applicant will need to reapply and recertify their BMP to reinstate the credit.

### **EDUCATION CREDIT**

Schools, faith-based organizations, after-school programs or other community organizations that host a program to educate K-12 students about stormwater using BWSC's approved educational materials are eligible for a **5%** stormwater charge reduction on their property upon completion of the approved curriculum. For school systems and organizations with multiple locations, each location must host their own program to receive a credit. The applicant will be required to provide documentation of their program, including the number of attendees, number of events, and photos. **The education credit is valid for 1 year from the date of acceptance, at which time the applicant must reapply for the credit.**

Once approved, your credit will appear on your bill and made retroactive to the date your application was submitted.

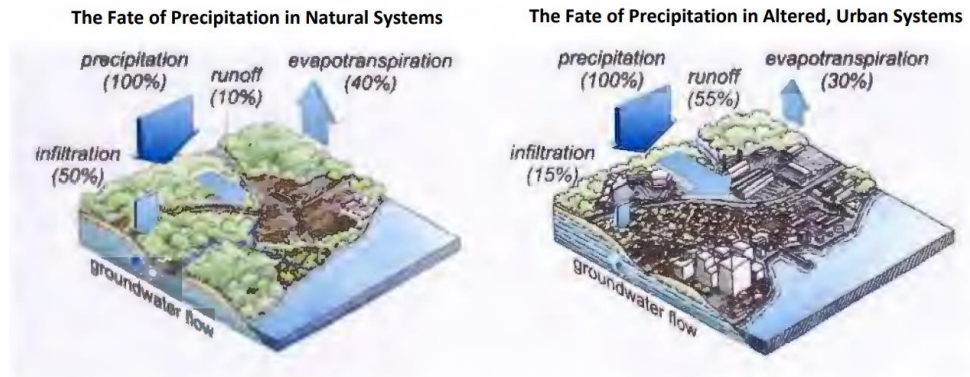
### **Eligible BMPs**

- Subsurface infiltration
- Infiltration Trench
- Surface Infiltration Basin
- Tree Filter
- Bioretention
- Biofiltration
- Biofiltration Planters
- Porous Asphalt
- Permeable Pavers
- Green Roofs
- Blue Roofs

**BWSC will consider other BMP types provided they meet the minimum criteria described Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook**

BWSC's approved curriculum can be found at <https://www.bwsc.org/environment-education/teachers-students>

Pictured: Figure from BWSC's Stormwater curriculum



### ELDERLY AND DISABILITY DISCOUNTS

BWSC offers a **30%** monthly discount to residential homeowners who are 65 years of age and older, or fully disabled and living in a 1-4 family residential dwelling. This discount applies to their monthly water, sewer and stormwater charges.

If you currently receive this discount on your water and sewer charges, the discount will be automatically applied to your stormwater charges, without needing to submit a new application.

For more information, visit <https://www.bwsc.org/residential-customers/billing-info-and-assistance>

### Credits and Discounts Can Be Combined

Applicants may apply for multiple options to further reduce their stormwater charge. The BMP credit, Education Credit, and Elderly and Disability Discount may be combined to achieve a **40%** maximum reduction in the stormwater charge.

Examples: Combining Credits and Discounts	
<i>Applicant A</i>	
Education Credit	5%
BMP Credit	30%
Sum of Credits	35%
<b>Total Approved Credit</b>	<b>35%</b>
<i>Applicant B</i>	
BMP Credit	30%
Elderly and Disability Discount	30%
Sum of Credits	60%
<b>Total Approved Credit</b>	<b>40%</b>

## Other Ways to Reduce Your Stormwater Charge

### IMPERVIOUS AREA REDUCTION

*Disclaimer: Not a part of the stormwater credit program*

All Non-Small Residential Property (NSRP) owners may apply for this reduction. To be eligible, the applicant must provide evidence of the impervious area removed from their property. Eligible applicants will receive a **100%** impervious area reduction for the impervious area removed from their property. The applicant's ERU and stormwater charge will be calculated based on the reduced impervious area. Applicants will continue to pay the stormwater charge for the remaining impervious area on their properties.

Removing impervious area helps reduce your demand on the stormwater system. You can capture additional stormwater runoff and further reduce your demand by using best management practices (described above).

#### Example: Impervious Area Reduction

1. Applicant provides evidence that structures were removed from their property.
2. BWSC staff member reviews application and adjusts applicant's impervious area.



Before



After

3. Applicant's ERU recalculated using new impervious area (1 ERU= 2,164 sq ft).

	Before	After
Impervious Area (sq ft)	13,021	10,685
ERUs*	7	5

\*Number of ERUs rounded up to the next whole number