Proposed Drainage Charge Discount Program

Grow Green – Landscape Professional Training

Feb 17, 2017
1. Background
2. Proposed Rules
3. Policy & Guidance (under development)
4. Schedule
5. Q&A
Drainage Charge begins 1982
- Response to 1981 Memorial Day flood
  - 13 lives lost
  - 35.5 million dollars in damage

Purpose of Drainage Charge
- Dedicated source of funding to address flooding, erosion, and water pollution

What is funded by the Drainage Charge
- Drainage charge is ~95% of the Watershed Protection Department (WPD) funding.
- FY17 WPD Budget of ~$93M
- Operate and Maintain
  - ~1,000 miles of storm sewer
  - ~900 ponds (maintain)
  - ~7,000 ponds (inspect)
  - ~900 miles of creeks/waterways
- Flood Warning – ATXfloods
Background – Charge Revision

- **Goals of 2015 Drainage Charge Revision**
  - Apply to entire property, not units on property
  - Calculated same way for all properties
  - Charge proportional to impact of each property

- **Drainage Charge Methodology**
  - Charge = Base Rate x Impervious Cover (IC) x Adjustment Factor based on percent IC

Find My Drainage Web Map
Background – Why propose a discount?

- **Recognize reduction in drainage impact**
  - Storing stormwater on your property can reduce the impact of impervious cover

- **Provide a way to reduce your bill**
  - Customers have options to reduce their other utility bills, why not drainage?

- **Reduce damaging effect of stormwater**
  - While impact reduction per property may be relatively small, it can have a large cumulative effect
• Currently, AWU offers a rainwater harvesting system rebate
  – $0.50/gallon for non-pressurized system (rain barrels)
  – $1.00/gallon for pressurized system (cisterns with pumps)
  – Up to ½ of equipment cost, $5,000 maximum

• And, a WaterWise rainscape rebate
  – $0.30/sq.ft., 100 sq.ft. minimum
  – $500 maximum

• More info at:
  http://www.austintexas.gov/department/water-conservation-rebates
Benchmarking

- Of 48 communities benchmarked, about 2/3 have credits, 1/3 have rebates
- Two TX Cities with recent Drainage charge changes
  - Houston – By volume, $0.10/barrel/month
  - San Antonio – By water quality volume, up to 30% of charge, commercial only
• **Equity and Cost of Service Assessment**
  – EPA found limited flood benefits from Green Infrastructure
  – Austin-area studies showed on-site controls had relatively small flood control benefits and high costs
  – On-site controls generally accepted to have water quality benefits, but little flood control benefits
    • Capacity may not be available in back-to-back storms
    • Cost of Service benefit to Drainage Utility expected to be very small
  – Some properties store more stormwater than legal requirements

• **Proposal**
  – Allow credits based on stormwater controls that exceed legal requirements, allowing up to 50% reduction of impervious cover.
Background – Code Changes


15-2-7-MONTHY DRAINAGE CHARGE

(C) The director may credit the monthly drainage charge based on voluntary installation of on-site stormwater control measures that exceed the applicable requirements of City Code, state law, or a development agreement with the City. A credit under this subsection:

(i) may not exceed an amount equivalent to a 50% reduction in the square feet of impervious cover under the formula established in Subsection (B) of this section; and

(ii) must be based on criteria, established by administrative rule, that tie the amount of the credit to the overall value of voluntary stormwater control measures in reducing runoff from the benefited property.
Proposed Rules

• Applicability / Eligibility
  – Applicants must be a current drainage utility customer or a tenant of the benefitted property.
  – If any permit or approval for SCM is required, applicant must show evidence of approval.
Proposed Rules

• Types of Controls
  – Only SCMs currently in Drainage Criteria Manual and Environmental Criteria Manual are eligible
    • Rain Barrels and Cisterns
    • Rain Gardens
    • Detention and Water Quality Ponds
    • Retention/Irrigation Systems
Proposed Rules

- Cistern
- Detention Pond
- Retention/Irrigation Pond
- Water Quality Pond
Proposed Rules

- **Calculation**
  - The amount of the discount will be limited to the impervious surface area that is mitigated by the SCM.

Example: SCM too small to capture all the IC that drains to it

- Total IC on Property = 3,000 SF
- Total IC Draining into SCM = 2,000 SF
- SCM Capacity = 33 SF
- Total IC mitigated = 33 SF
Proposed Rules

Example: SCM has more capacity than the IC draining to it

Total IC on Property = 2,000 SF

Total IC Draining into SCM = 1,000 SF
SCM Capacity = 3,000 SF
Total IC mitigated = 1,000 SF
Proposed Rules

• **Inspection and Maintenance**
  – Customers receiving discount must service and maintain SCM in order to retain discount.
  – Information found to be inaccurate may result in loss of discount or back debit.

• **Timeline**
  – Discount is valid for two years starting on date of approval. To renew discount, customer must complete renewal process.
Policy & Guidance – How much discount?

- Credit based on capture volume offsetting runoff from Impervious Cover (IC)
- 0.6 sqft of IC / gallon of SCM
- Available to all land uses

![Graph showing Impervious Cover Reduction from Stormwater Control Measures (SCM)]
**Policy & Guidance – How much discount?**

**Median House Examples**

(3,100 sqft IC, 37% IC)

- Volume of one standard 55 gal Rain Barrel translates to $0.22 per month savings
- 3,000 gal cistern could negate up to half the IC, thus 69% of the charge, though installation cost ~$3,500

Incentive for On-Site Stormwater Control for Median House charge of $11.80/mo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drainage Charge Reduction per month</th>
<th>$0.22</th>
<th>$0.43</th>
<th>$2.09</th>
<th>$3.99</th>
<th>$6.66</th>
<th>$8.10</th>
<th>$8.10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gallons</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>5,500</td>
</tr>
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Policy & Guidance – How much discount?

Total Property Size = 6,000 SF
Total IC on Property = 3,000 SF, 50%
Monthly Drainage Charge = $14.41

Example: SCM too small to capture all the IC that drains to it

Total IC Draining into SCM = 2,000 SF
SCM Capacity = 33 SF
Total IC mitigated = 33 SF
Total Discount = $0.29 per month
Revised Charge = $14.12
Example: SCM not mitigating to capacity

- Total Property Size = 6,000 SF
- Total IC on Property = 2,000 SF, 33%
- Drainage Charge = $7.05
- Total IC Draining into SCM = 1,000 SF
- SCM Capacity = 3,000 SF
- Total IC mitigated = 1,000 SF
- Total Discount = $4.82 per month
- Revised Charge = $2.23
Policy & Guidance - How To Apply

- Applications can be submitted online or mailed and should include:
  - Customer Information
  - Type of SCM
  - Volume of SCM
  - Area that feeds SCM
  - Image of SCM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DRAINAGE DISCOUNT APPLICATION FORM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPLICANT INFORMATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name: Last ____________ First _____ Date______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility Billing Address __________ Apartment/Unit # __________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City _________ State _____ ZIP _____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone (______) __________ E-mail Address ___________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility Account No ______________</td>
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Has Your SCM been approved AWU rebate program Yes No

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STORMWATER CONTROL MEASURE DETAILS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Include attached documentation (photos and SCM layout)</td>
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</table>

SCM TYPE __________ GALLONS ______ IMPERVIOUS COVER MITIGATED ______ SQUARE FEET
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TOTAL ______ GALLONS TOTAL ______ SQUARE FEET

DECLARER AND SIGNATURE
• **Applications may also include:**
  – Proof that the SCM exceeds legal requirements for property
    • Typically for detention/WQ ponds
  – If required, evidence of permit approval
  – Sketch or plan of SCM layout may be required based on amount applied for
Timeline / Next Steps

• February 2017
  – Public Comments due – Feb 4
  – Rule Adoption – end Feb

• April 2017
  – Draft Policy & Guidance Documents

• Spring-Summer 2017
  – Begin Accepting Applications for Discounts
Questions?

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