

Stormwater User Fee Credit Manual

City of Anniston

January 2015

SECTION 1 – GENERAL INFORMATION

Stormwater user fee credits are made available to eligible customers that are classified as one of the following:

- Religious institutions, faith-based organizations, and/or places of worship, the sanctuary building and associated parking facility only. .
- Non-profit organizations classified under 501(c)(3) according to the Internal Revenue Service. (Must provide evidence of 501(c)(3) classification.)
- The City of Anniston School System (the school system.).

These credits are made available for non-profit and faith-based organizations as well as the school system that undertake specific stormwater management activities that are approved by the City. If an organization that is designated as an eligible customer within the City of Anniston Stormwater User Fee Credit Manual (the Manual) enacts a specific credit activity that is approved by the City, then the customer will be eligible to receive a credit on their annual stormwater user fee charge. Credits will be periodically reviewed by the City for compliance with the applicable standards in the the Manual. Credits are given for the following type activities: water resources education programs, watershed stewardship activities, and removal of impervious surfaces.

The Manual outlines the criteria and procedures for eligible customers to secure and maintain a stormwater user fee credit(s) for their property. An approved user fee credit will result in a reduction of the customer’s annual stormwater user fee charge. The credit is only applicable for City approved activities and/or programs that are properly implemented in accordance with this Manual. In general, the credit activities undertaken should assist the City in meeting its stormwater management service delivery obligations as well as addressing specific regulatory compliance requirements associated with the City’s NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit.

Stormwater User Fee Credit Summary

Table 1 summarizes the user fee credits available to eligible customers. Please refer to the ensuing sections of this Manual for further details regarding the various credits, policies, procedures, etc.

Table 1: Stormwater User Fee Credit Summary		
<i>Credit Description</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>% Reduction</i>
Watershed Stewardship Activities ¹	1 year	5% to 50%
Water Resources Education Program	1 year	50%
Removal of Impervious Area ²	1 Time Only	100%

Note 1: The "Watershed Stewardship" credit shall be applied in 5% increments for each approved watershed stewardship event that is completed by an eligible customer and as described in this Manual.

Note 2: The "Removal of Impervious Area" credit is different than the other credits shown in the table so the customer should carefully review the text within the Manual for details.

SECTION 2 – CREDIT POLICIES & APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Stormwater User Fee Credit Policies

The City has established the following general policies regarding consideration and approval of stormwater user fee credits. Please refer to applicable sections of the City Ordinance 14-O-17 for definitions, additional guidance, and requirements pertaining to the stormwater user fee credits.

- The time period to secure credits will generally encompass the time period of July 1 to June 30 of each year. Customers who submit their applications, and have their credit(s) approved prior to June 30 of any year, will have their approved credit(s) applied to the next annual billing, which will likely occur in October of each year. Credit applications submitted after June 30 may not be eligible for a credit in that same year on the October billing.
- Credits are only approved for (and applied to) eligible customers that meet applicable criteria as set forth in the Manual.

Stormwater User Fee Credit Application Procedures

The following is an overview of the stormwater user fee credit application procedures that a customer should follow to obtain and maintain credits. All of the credits in this Manual require an application as well as review and approval by the City staff. The procedure for submitting a credit application generally includes the following tasks:

- Obtain a copy of the Credit Manual from the City and determine what (if any) credits the customer may be eligible to apply for and fill out the required application materials.
- Submit the completed credit application with all sections appropriately filled out and attach all the required supporting documentation.
- The City will review complete application packages and notify the customer if the request is approved or denied within 30 days of receipt of the application. Incomplete application packages will not be considered by the City and will be returned to the customer for completion and/or revision.
- If the credit application is approved, the City will apply the stormwater user fee credit to the next annual billing cycle as outlined herein.
- During the credit term outlined in the Manual, the City has the right to make inquiries to the applicant to ensure conformance to the Manual criteria.

- Stormwater user fee credits are applicable to a customer account as outlined in this Manual. It will be the responsibility of the customer to renew the credit at the appropriate time by resubmitting the application package for review and approval by the City each year.

SECTION 3 – CREDIT DETAILS AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES

This section explains the detailed procedures involved in applying for a stormwater user fee credits. These procedures include step-by-step instructions and the specific requirements for securing stormwater user fee credits. Listed below are the stormwater user fee credits that eligible customers can apply for and secure. Customers should follow the credit application procedures outlined herein for each credit they desire to secure. Customers should contact the City at (256) 231-7722 with any questions that arise.

Watershed Stewardship Activities

Credit Description

Eligible customers generally consisting of non-profit religious institutions and faith-based organizations can apply for this stormwater user fee credit if the customer participates in a City approved local watershed stewardship activity or event. Eligible events are set up, organized, and executed through a coordinated effort with the City staff and with City approval. Customers seeking this credit will have to demonstrate that at least 25 individuals, or 25% of the church's congregation, whichever is less, participated in this event to receive a credit.

In general, eligible watershed stewardship activities include approved State programs such as Adopt-A-Stream and Adopt-A-Mile, or City programs such as Storm Drain Marking, etc. Other activities may be eligible for a user fee credit, but customers must verify the eligibility of the activity with the City staff in advance.

- The customer can obtain a 5% credit for each watershed stewardship event that they successfully complete up to a maximum of 50%. For example, if an eligible customer successfully participated in and completed 5 events within a year then the customer account would be credited 25% on the next annual stormwater user fill bill. For this credit, the customer can only participate in a total of 10 events within a 12 month period.

Credit Application Procedures

The customer shall follow the procedures below when applying for a stormwater user fee credit for Watershed Stewardship:

STEP 1: The customer shall secure the required approval(s) from the City for the Watershed Stewardship activity or event event(s) **prior to holding the event.**

STEP 2: The customer shall submit a credit application for each watershed stewardship event that they request approval to undertake, and include the relevant

supporting information. The customer should consult with the City as to the supporting information that needs to be submitted in the application.

STEP 3: The City shall review the application and supporting documentation. If the requested watershed stewardship event is approved to be held, the customer will be notified by the City and the customer may then proceed with the event.

STEP 4: Once the event is completed, the customer shall submit proper documentation to demonstrate the successful completion of the event such that the City can apply a 5% credit to the account. If the post-event documentation is not properly submitted to the City and the City does not approve the credit, the City will notify the customer via correspondence explaining why the credit application was not applied so that the customer can attempt to resolve the matter.

The customer may receive credit for holding up to 10 events within any 12 month period. Please note that credits for holding more than 10 events will not carry over into the following year.

The time period for applying credit to customer accounts runs between July 1 and June 30 of each year. The customer should be sure to obtain the proper approvals from the City prior to holding a watershed stewardship event for which they desire to secure a stormwater user fee credit. Failure of the customer to obtain the required approvals may result in the percent reduction credit not being applied to the account.

Water Resources Education Program

Credit Description

The City encourages and supports the efforts of the school system to educate and inform the public on the importance of water resources management issues. In an effort to further encourage this type of large scale educational activity, the City shall offer a stormwater user fee credit to the City of Anniston School System in association with the school system taking a leadership role in the City of Anniston Groundwater Festival that is scheduled to be held annually beginning in the 2015/2016 school year. The Groundwater Festival is a designated compliance activity within the City's NPDES MS4 Permit Stormwater Management Plan and the City feels that the school system's participation in this event will enhance its effectiveness.

The *Water Resources Education Program* credit shall be made available to the school system and will result in the award of a 50% credit to the school system's annual stormwater user fee. In order to secure this credit, the education program implemented by the school system must be pre-coordinated and approved by the City to ensure that it is consistent with the City's overall stormwater management program and regulatory compliance requirements pertaining to Public Education and Public Involvement (i.e. the Groundwater Festival).

Credit Application Procedures

The following information shall be provided by the school system to the City in order to receive approval of the Water Resources Education Program credit:

- STEP 1: The customer shall submit an application to the City which includes a narrative of the proposed program for the Groundwater Festival for review and approval by the City.
- STEP 2: The application should include the necessary details regarding the proposed program for the Groundwater Festival including the expected number of participants that will participate in the festival.
- STEP 3: Upon receipt of the credit application, the City shall review the information. If the credit application associated with the Groundwater Festival is approved, the school system will be notified and allowed to proceed with implementation. If the City representative does not approve of the credit application, the City will notify the school system as to why the credit application was not approved and will provide recommendations that can be implemented to secure approval.
- STEP 4: Once the school system schedules and completes the Groundwater Festival program, they should notify the City such that the 50% credit can be applied to the next annual billing statement.
- STEP 5: The school system should submit the credit application annually to document that the Groundwater Festival education program is ongoing and to ensure that the City applies the credit each year.

Removal of Impervious Surface

Credit Description

The City desires to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff that discharges from impervious surfaces within the City. As such, the City encourages property owners to minimize or reduce (where possible) the amount of impervious cover on their parcel. The City has developed this credit to incentivize property owners who have large parking areas that are used infrequently to remove existing impervious cover and thereby lessen the impacts of stormwater runoff.

A credit shall apply to those eligible customers who can document that they have successfully removed impervious surface from their property and replaced the areas with pervious cover (i.e. grass, landscaping, etc). Eligible customers consist of the type customers that are defined in this Manual because they typically have large parking areas that are not used consistently on a daily basis for various reasons. Please note that gravel or compacted dirt are NOT pervious and do not absorb rainfall like grass and landscape areas. Customers who have shown that they have removed 25% of the existing impervious cover from their property shall qualify for this credit for the year in which the activity occurred. The ongoing benefit to the customer will be that their monthly stormwater user fee charge will be lower based on the calculation method used for non-residential parcels.

Credit Application Procedures

The following requirements will apply for customers who qualify for this stormwater user fee credit:

- STEP 1: Determine the total impervious surface for the parcel using the definition of impervious surface contained in the ordinance.
- STEP 2: Develop a simple sketch plan to illustrate which impervious surfaces will be removed as part of the credit application as well as the proposed material that will replace the impervious surface.
- STEP 3: Review the proposed plan with the City staff to ensure that all applicable City Codes are adhered to and secure the required approvals as well as any variances (where necessary) prior to submittal of the credit application to the City.
- STEP 4: Submit the credit application to the City for official review and approval.
- STEP 5: After securing the required City approvals, perform the field work activities as specified in the approved plan.
- STEP 6: At the conclusion of the field work, provide the City documentation that the work performed is generally consistent with the approved credit application.

After receipt of the documentation, the City shall review the information for compliance with the original application. If the credit is approved, the stormwater user fee credit will be applied, starting with the next annual billing cycle. If the City representative does not approve of the customer's application, the City will send a letter to the customer explaining why the credit application was not approved.

If the customer is deemed to have fully complied with the approved credit application, the customer's stormwater user fee charge will be reduced to \$0 for the next annual billing cycle. At the next annual billing event the following year, the customer's annual user fee charge will be billed going forward using the reduced impervious surface square footage associated with the property.

SECTION 4: STORMWATER USER FEE CREDIT APPLICATION FORMS

Stormwater user fee credit applications are required to secure approval of all credits offered in this Manual. The forms and documents attached to the appendices are summarized below.

- Appendix A includes the credit application forms for the stormwater user fee credits described in this Manual.

