

# CURRENTS

## All About Permeable Pavers

Learn about an alternative to impervious paving surfaces



Impervious surfaces such as traditional asphalt, concrete, and roofing prevent or limit the infiltration of stormwater into the ground. Instead, that stormwater runs off into streets and sewers, contributing to flooding and river pollution. That is why the amount of impervious area on each property in Pittsburgh is the basis for our stormwater fee, which funds projects and services to manage stormwater runoff.

You can reduce your monthly stormwater fee by receiving a credit for managing a defined amount of stormwater runoff on your own property, or by reducing the amount of impervious area on your property. Permeable pavement or pavers, when designed with a sub-base to allow

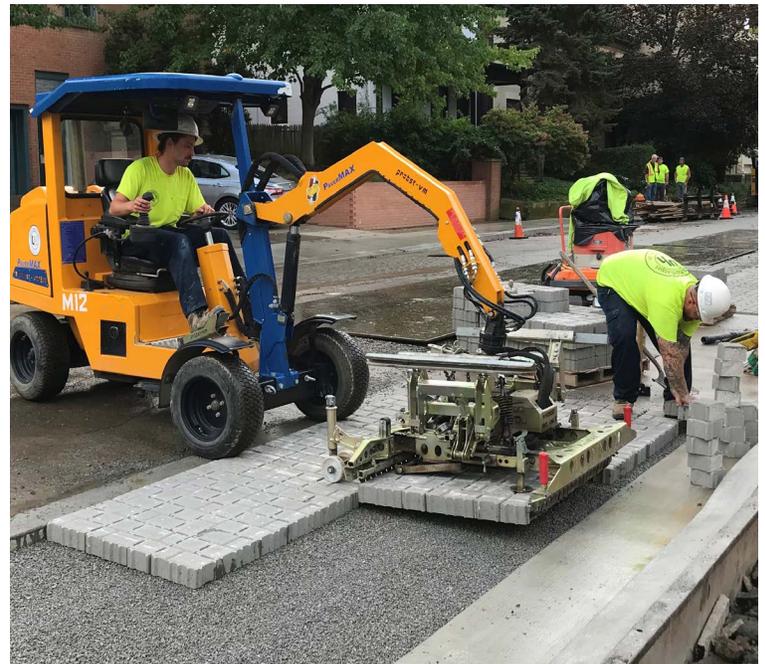
for stormwater infiltration and management, can be deducted from the impervious area calculated for your parcel.

Permeable pavement allows rain or melting snow to soak or pass through its surface, like water trickling through a sponge or a sieve. Examples of permeable pavement include pervious concrete, porous asphalt, and permeable pavers. Permeable pavers, which look like bricks or blocks, interlock with small spaces between each paver so that water can flow between the gaps.

Permeable pavers are usually installed in parking lots, driveways, walkways, patios, or other areas with light vehicle traffic. For example, we recently installed

permeable pavers in the parking lanes on Howe Street and Kentucky Avenue for the Maryland Avenue Stormwater Improvement Project in Shadyside. These permeable pavers direct stormwater runoff into underground systems of gravel and storage pipes and hold the excess water back from our overwhelmed sewers during storms.

Like other infrastructure, permeable pavers need to be inspected and maintained to function properly. Regular removal of leaves, soil, and other debris from the surface helps prevent clogging of the paver gaps. Vacuuming or sweeping the surface, then replenishing or replacing the top layer of stones between the paver gaps, can provide a deeper clean on a scheduled or as needed basis.



Interlocking permeable pavers were installed in parking lanes on Kentucky Avenue and Howe Street in Shadyside.

**Next Board Meeting:  
September 23**

For a complete list of PWSA's board and community meetings, please visit [Pgh2o.com/events-meetings](https://pgh2o.com/events-meetings).

Following COVID-19 restrictions, meetings are held virtually and may be tentative or postponed.

Join our email list to get the latest news and updates.

Signing up is simple at [pgh2o.com/subscribe](https://pgh2o.com/subscribe).





# Additional Stormwater Resources

Explore the resources below for additional information about the stormwater fee, including the stormwater credit program, customer assistance and a web map where you can search your property.

**STORMWATER CREDIT PROGRAM:** Our Stormwater Credit Program offers a discount on the monthly stormwater fee. Property owners choosing to manage stormwater on site may reduce their monthly stormwater charge. Installing stormwater management systems such as a rain garden or an underground stormwater system on private property are examples of how a private property owner may earn a credit. Find out more information and apply at [pgh2o.com/stormwater-fee](http://pgh2o.com/stormwater-fee).

**FEE FINDER WEBSITE:** Use our searchable map to view the amount of impervious surface on your property and understand your stormwater fee. To use the site:

- Launch the [Fee Finder Website](#)
- Enter your address in the search bar and press enter
- Click inside the boundaries of your property to view details about its impervious surface and the number of Equivalent Residential Units (ERU's)
- To determine your fee amount, multiply the number of ERU's by the stormwater rate of \$5.96 and subtract any credits that may apply

**DISPUTING STORMWATER FEE:** If you have questions about the amount of impervious surface calculated for your property or believe there is a discrepancy, please contact our Customer Service department by calling 412-255-2423 (Press 5), to start the process.

Visit [pgh2ostormwater.com](http://pgh2ostormwater.com) for more information about our plans to manage stormwater.

Please call PWSA Customer Service at **412-255-2423 (Press 5)** or email [info@pgh2o.com](mailto:info@pgh2o.com) for questions about the stormwater fee or general questions about the credit program.

## Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Donate to the Hardship Grant Program online at [Pgh2o.com/give](http://Pgh2o.com/give).

## Enroll in eBilling

Convenient and easy to use, our online billing and payment portal ensures timely delivery of bills and payments. Visit [Pgh2o.com/ebilling](http://Pgh2o.com/ebilling) to enroll.

Penn Liberty Plaza 1  
1200 Penn Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

**Customer Service\***  
T 412.255.2423 (Press 5)  
[info@pgh2o.com](mailto:info@pgh2o.com)  
*\*translation services available*

**Emergency Dispatch\***  
412.255.2423 (Press 1)  
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# WATER WISE

## Underground Storage Explained



Partially installed R-Tanks at the bottom of the Centre and Herron Stormwater Project in the Hill District.

Underground storage systems are designed to hold stormwater runoff back from the overwhelmed sewer system, which helps reduce street flooding, basement backups, and river pollution. They can be installed beneath rain gardens, playgrounds, pavement, or grassy areas.

Stormwater is routed into an underground storage system through storm drains, soil, or domed grates. Since most of Pittsburgh has clay soil, it is often difficult for stormwater to soak into the ground. Instead, most of our storage systems slowly release the stormwater into the sewer system after it rains.

If you are looking for ways to manage stormwater on your property or are pursuing a stormwater credit, an underground storage system can help. Visit [pgh2o.com/stormwater-credit-program](http://pgh2o.com/stormwater-credit-program) to learn more.

### Examples of Underground Storage:

- **Gravel Storage:** These layers of small stones contain empty spaces, called voids, that allow water to flow through and fill up the space. It is ideal for urban environments because it can support the weight of paving and vehicles.
- **R-Tanks:** These modular plastic crates can be placed side-by-side and stacked to fit small or large spaces. Water can pass through the openings in the sides of the crate, then fill up the empty space inside.
- **Pipe Storage:** These large circular or arched pipes are made of plastic, metal, or concrete, and have capped ends to hold stormwater inside. The pipes are placed side-by-side underground, connected, and then surrounded by gravel.