

# CURRENTS

Pittsburgh resident, Jamil Bey, transforms property for stormwater management, reduces stormwater fee



A rain garden and absorbent soils will slow flow at the bottom of the hill in Jamil's backyard.

As Pittsburghers, our weather memories are rife with recollections of downpour events. We are no strangers to absolute soaker storms and often marvel at the sheets of rain falling from the skies. As heavy, intense storms continue to impact our region, stormwater management is a growing concern.

Taking actions to reduce runoff from your property is helpful to our sewershed and rivers, and, when done properly, can result in a credit towards the stormwater fee on your bill. Credits are awarded to customers that have stormwater control measures in place which capture and detain a defined amount of runoff, thereby

reducing the amount entering the sewer system. For more information, please visit our [Stormwater Credit](#) program page.

Jamil Bey, a resident of Pittsburgh's Overbrook neighborhood, has transformed his property with a clever and effective home stormwater management system and is receiving a credit towards his stormwater fee.

Jamil's house contends with two slopes; a gradual slope rolls laterally across his driveway and a steeper slope descends from the house downhill into his backyard. Taking advantage of the natural topography, Jamil installed a stormwater grate at the edge of his driveway

to collect fast moving water from the raised portion of the impervious concrete to the depressed side. He also had drains installed in his concrete walkways to redirect water into the management system. The downspouts from his gutters are redirected into the stormwater management system.

Jamil has lined the side of his property extending from the end of his walkway downhill into his backyard with rocks and cobbles that form a shallow, elongated bowl. This intervention helps to slow water moving downhill.

The water, collected from the driveway and walkways into drains, is redirected by pipes to an outflow that empties into a rain garden. The rain garden is located in his backyard at an elevation lower than all impervious surfaces on his property.

A rain garden effectively slows down the flow of water on a property. It is populated with absorbent plants and soils that excel at soaking up water. Native plants such as coneflower, goldenrod, Christmas fern, and swamp rose mallow have root

## Next Board Meeting: July 23

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

systems adapted to wetter conditions. Many of these plants are also attractive to pollinators. Incorporating native trees and shrubs is another effective rain garden addition.

Collectively, all parts in the system that Jamil Bey has installed have reduced the amount of stormwater moving downhill. If Jamil's actions were replicated across the city, the benefits to our watershed and sewershed would be amplified, bringing enduring positive changes to our built environment.

Bringing mindfulness to our stormwater management practices at home benefits our whole community. If you would like to learn more about actions you can take to make an impact, be sure to check out the [Stormwater Resources](#) available on our website.

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

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





# Additional Stormwater Resources

Explore the resources below for additional information about the stormwater fee, the stormwater credit program, and a searchable map to understand the amount of hard surface on your property.

**Stormwater Credit Program:** Property owners choosing to manage stormwater on site may reduce their monthly stormwater charge by installing stormwater management systems such as a rain garden or an underground stormwater system on their property. For information about the stormwater credit and to apply visit [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 for the amount of impervious surface and Equivalent Residential Units (ERU's)
- To determine your fee amount, multiply the number of ERU's by the current stormwater rate 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.

**Questions:** Please call PWSA Customer Service at [412-255-2423 \(Press 5\)](tel:412-255-2423) or email [info@pgh2o.com](mailto:info@pgh2o.com) for questions about the stormwater fee or general questions about the credit program. For more information about our plans to manage stormwater, please visit [pgh2ostormwater.com](http://pgh2ostormwater.com).

## Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Your donation to PWSA's Hardship Grant Program will directly benefit PWSA customers having difficulty paying their bill. Donate 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.

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### Customer Service\*

T 412.255.2423 (Press 5)

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### Emergency Dispatch\*

412.255.2423 (Press 1)

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# WATER WISE

## Properly caring for lawns and gardens protects local waterways



Fertilizers may help your garden or lawn grow, but nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus found in fertilizers can harm our rivers and streams. When it rains, any fertilizer nutrients that haven't been used by plants are washed away into these bodies of water. Nutrients can cause excessive growth of algae and aquatic weeds, which reduces the amount of oxygen in the water and can harm fish and aquatic wildlife.

Follow these tips to protect our streams and rivers!

- Only fertilize if necessary and do not over apply.
- Use a soil test to measure existing nutrient levels.
- If your soil phosphorus levels are adequate, select a phosphorus-free fertilizer.
- Select slow-release and organic fertilizers, which are less likely to wash away.
- Spread grass clippings over your lawn to provide needed nitrogen to soil.
- Fertilize lawns in the fall to promote root growth and prevent nutrients from washing away during spring rains.

Learn more at [pgh2o.com/help-manage-stormwater](http://pgh2o.com/help-manage-stormwater).