



Stormwater Utility FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions



1. How are fees used for stormwater management?

- ▶ Stormwater utility fees are dedicated to repair, replace, maintain and construct systems to manage stormwater runoff. The Stormwater system consists of the following:
 - ▶ Storm drains
 - ▶ Ditches and conveyances
 - ▶ Detention facilities management and maintenance to prevent flooding.

Detention Facilities

- ▶ Pictured: LaVenture - Anderson Detention Pond
- ▶ The detention pond receives stormwater from LaVenture Road storm drains.
- ▶ City Staff routinely inspects and maintains.



Detention Facilities

- ▶ Pictured: Freeway Drive infiltration - detention swale
- ▶ The detention swale receives stormwater from Freeway Drive.
- ▶ City Staff routinely inspects and maintains.





1. How are fees used for stormwater management?

- Inspections and assessments
- Investigations of illegal dumping of material into storm systems
- Maintenance and construction of projects such as:
 - Sewer lining and pipe rehabilitation
 - Pump Station maintenance
 - Catch Basin cleaning
 - Street sweeping and cleanliness
- Flood Prevention and Mitigation
- Fish Passage Culvert Replacements
- Water quality education and outreach
- Local Source Control (water quality) Inspection Program

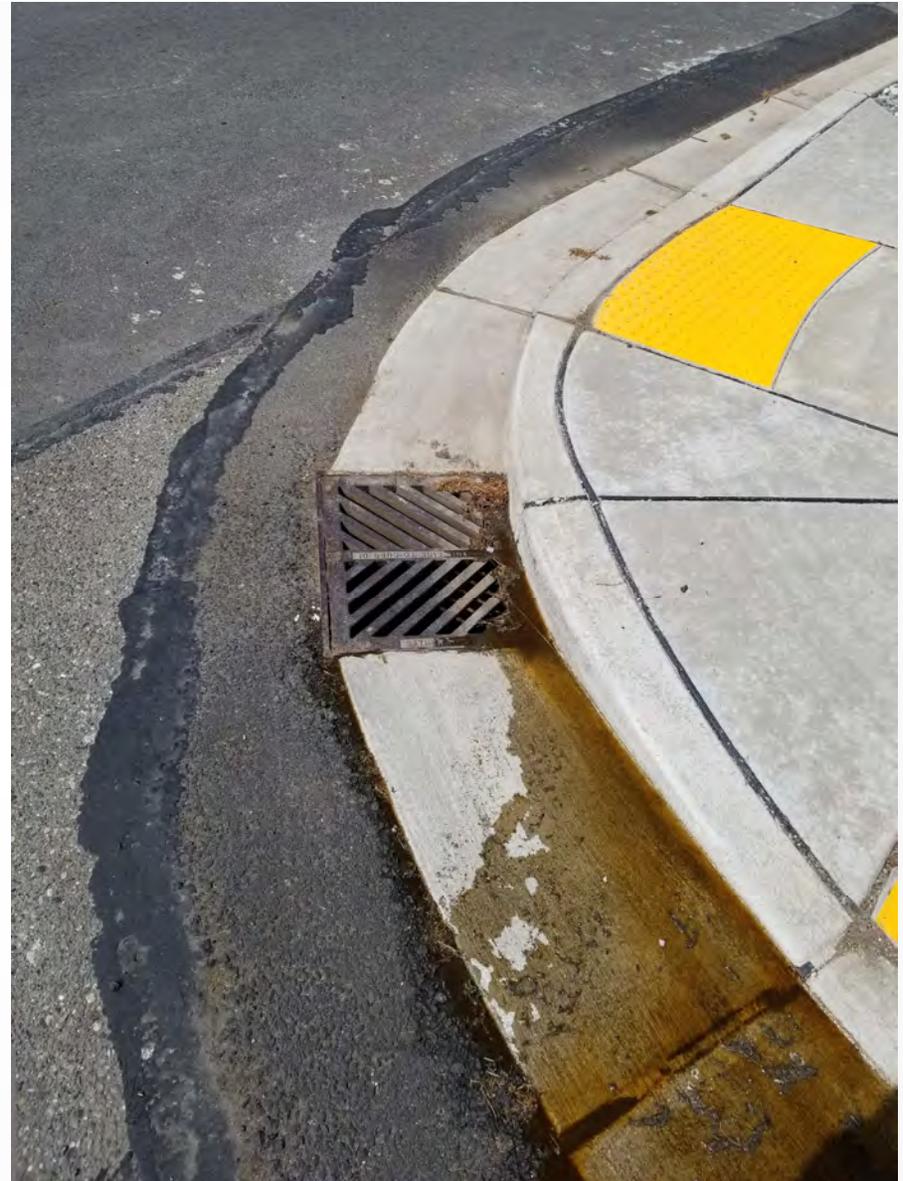
Inspection and Assessment



- ▶ Pictured: LaVenture - Anderson Detention Pond
- ▶ City owned ponds are inspected annually to assess any stormwater drainage issues.

Illicit Discharge and Connection Elimination

- ▶ Spills and illegal dumping reports are responded to immediately by city staff to track the source of the spill and supervise cleanup efforts.



Storm Sewer Lining

- ▶ Sewer and Stormwater lining projects provide a cost-effective alternative to replacing aged or defective transmission lines.
- ▶ City Staff or contractors can line existing, damaged pipe with a coating of plastic to increase the transmission line life expectancy.





Pipe Maintenance and Replacement

- ▶ As a last resort, Stormwater transmission lines can be replaced if they are too degraded to be lined.



Street Sweeping and Cleanliness

- ▶ Routine street sweeping keeps sediment, debris and foliage from entering storm drains.



Culvert Cleaning

- ▶ City conducts an annual culvert assessment and inspection.
- ▶ If an existing culvert requires maintenance action due to drainage capacity concerns or because it is not functioning as intended, City staff will perform required maintenance actions to rectify the issue.



Park Street Pump Station

- ▶ Park Street is one of seven stormwater pump stations in the City of Mount Vernon.
- ▶ Park Street is over 80-years old and in the preliminary design process for upgrades.



Kulshan Creek Pump Station

- ▶ Kulshan Creek pump station is one of the largest and newest pump stations in the City.



Kulshan Pump Station (inside)

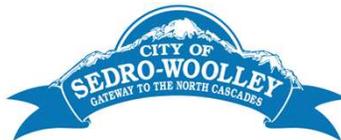
- ▶ This pump station operations keep Riverside Drive and College Way flood free.



Flood Prevention and Mitigation

- ▶ In 2021, the floodwall prevented the Skagit River from overflowing its banks and flooding the downtown.
- ▶ Pictured: The Streets Division setting up the floodwall along the waterfront.





Source Control Program

- Source Control Program (SCP) contributes to the efforts of keeping stormwater clean as it drains from local businesses to our streams.
- The SCP assists public and private entities in achieving clean water quality standards.
- Several local jurisdictions participate in this program as a requirement for our municipal stormwater permit.
- Working together on a combined program is more cost effective and delivers a consistent message.



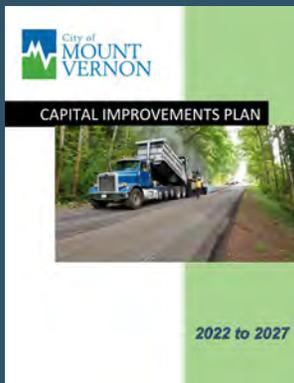
1. How are fees used for stormwater management?



- ▶ The Stormwater Utility funds water quality monitoring and management required by the Federal Government under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit, ensuring local municipal government compliance for clean stormwater to enter streams, the Skagit River, and ultimately the Puget Sound.



1. How are fees used for stormwater management?



City efforts are also funded from the fees, included but not limited to:

Detention facilities management and maintenance

Citywide Storm water management planning

Public education and involvement

City coordination with other local agencies and local/regional efforts related to environmental and stormwater issues



A five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Stormwater Comprehensive Plan are developed to identify and prioritize needed repairs and improvements.

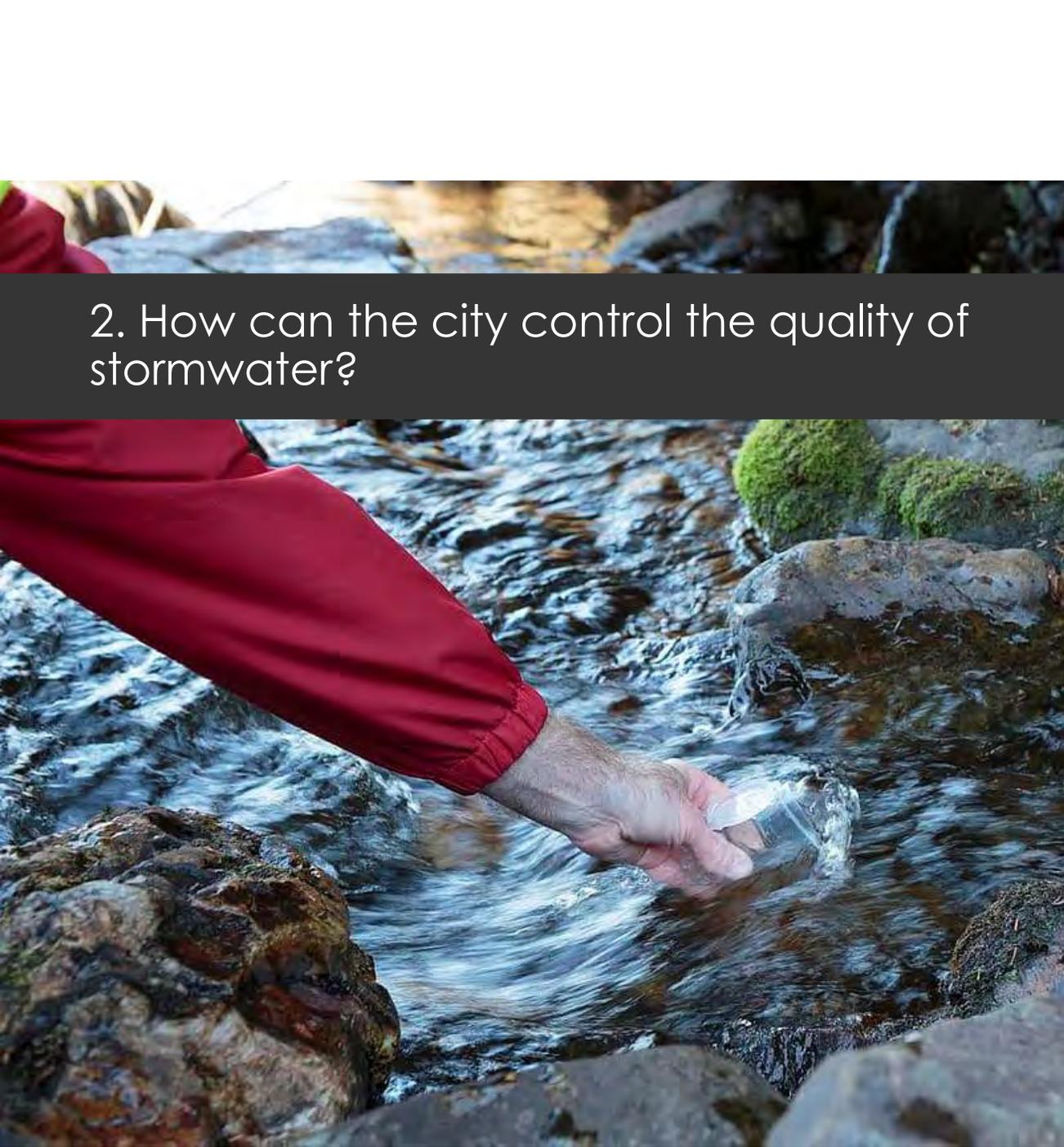


BNSF Culvert Replacement

An Example of a CIP project:

Kulshan Creek Culvert Removal Project was a cooperative effort between the City of Mount Vernon and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway.

The project was a success as it removed an undersized culvert and replaced it with a bridge.

A person wearing a red jacket is shown from the side, reaching into a stream to collect a water sample. The stream flows over dark, mossy rocks. The person's hand is holding a clear plastic container, and water is being poured into it. The background shows more of the stream and rocks.

2. How can the city control the quality of stormwater?

- The City is required to meet certain water quality requirements for all stormwater discharged into the waterways and wetlands of our community.
- Sources of pollution must be identified and isolated.
- Stream monitoring and outfall screening has been implemented to trace illegal discharges and/or connections to the stormwater system.

3. How can individuals reduce their impacts on stormwater quality?

- ▶ Routine car maintenance reduces oil drippings and other leaks onto our roads.
- ▶ Switching to biodegradable products for landscaping and car washing.

- ▶ Wash cars at dedicated car wash stations.

OR

- ▶ Wash cars on grassed areas that capture and infiltrate soap and other debris instead of flowing directly into a storm basin.



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

NOTICE
Disposal Fees

Disposal fee is at the discretion of City of Mount Vernon staff.

- A minimum charge of \$1.00 per two 35 gallon cans, or the equivalent if in bags.
- Loads in excess of one cubic yard, up to \$2.00 or more.
- Loads in excess of two cubic yards, up to \$3.00 or more.
- Loads in excess of five cubic yards, up to \$6.00 or more.

* Items to be disposed of at this time are yard waste items.

* Yard waste facility is only for the City of Mount Vernon residents. If you are not a resident of the City of Mount Vernon you will need to call and make arrangements to be made for your yard waste disposal within the City of Mount Vernon.

* If reported with amount of disposal fee you are a resident of the City of Mount Vernon.

* You will be required to verify service address with utility bill if a bill has not been received.

* City of Mount Vernon staff has the right to refuse any yard waste materials.

* No commercial quantities allowed.

* No home based businesses allowed.

MOUNT VERNON YARD WASTE DROP-OFF FACILITY
CITY OF MOUNT VERNON RESIDENTS ONLY

SUMMER HOURS: MAR - OCT	WINTER HOURS: NOV - FEB
CLOSED: MONDAY & TUESDAY	CLOSED: MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY
OPEN: WED - FRI 11:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.	OPEN: WED, SAT & SUN 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
SAT & SUN 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	

WE ACCEPT ANYTHING ORGANIC, GRASS, LEAVES, BRUSH, BRANCHES, FRUITS, VEGETABLES, CLEAN LUMBER AND SHREDDED PAPER

WE CANNOT ACCEPT, HOUSEHOLD GARBAGE, ROCKS, SOD, LARGE STUMPS, ANIMAL WASTE, RAILROAD TIES, PAINTED LUMBER OR CONTRACTOR LOADS

PLEASE ASK ATTENDANT FOR PROPER DISPOSAL OPTIONS OF UNACCEPTABLE MATERIAL

Pictured: Mount Vernon Yard Waste Facility at 1010 Shop Lane

3. How can individuals reduce their impacts on stormwater quality?

- ▶ Never drain oil, wastewater, antifreeze, or other chemicals into storm basins as they drain directly into streams.
- ▶ Clean up after your pet's. Do not dump waste into any stormdrains or water ways.

A pug dog is standing on a patch of green grass. It has large, translucent blue fairy wings and two antennae with small blue flowers at the tips. The background is a bright blue sky with a few more small blue flowers.

There's no such thing as the Poop Fairy

Only you can make your pet's waste disappear.

Pet waste contains harmful bacteria and parasites that make people and pets sick. When it is left on the ground, it washes down storm drains and contaminates our streams and rivers.

Scoop it. Bag it. Trash it.

A row of logos for various local organizations: Skagit Conservation District, City of Mount Vernon, Redmond, City of Bellingham, City of Skagit, Burlington, Skagit County, Port of Skagit, and City of Oak Harbor.

3. How can individuals reduce their impacts on stormwater quality?

- Use biodegradable products on roofs and driveways.
- Conservatively utilize fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides in the yard or garden.
- Plant native vegetation in order to develop better filtration for pollution runoff.



4. Does everyone pay a stormwater fee?



All customers with improved properties within the City will pay a stormwater utility fee.



The fee for residential property is the rate for one ESU (Equivalent Service Unit). One ESU is equal to 3,200 square feet of impervious surface area. The charge of an ESU per month is \$14.22. (2023)



4. Does everyone pay a stormwater fee?

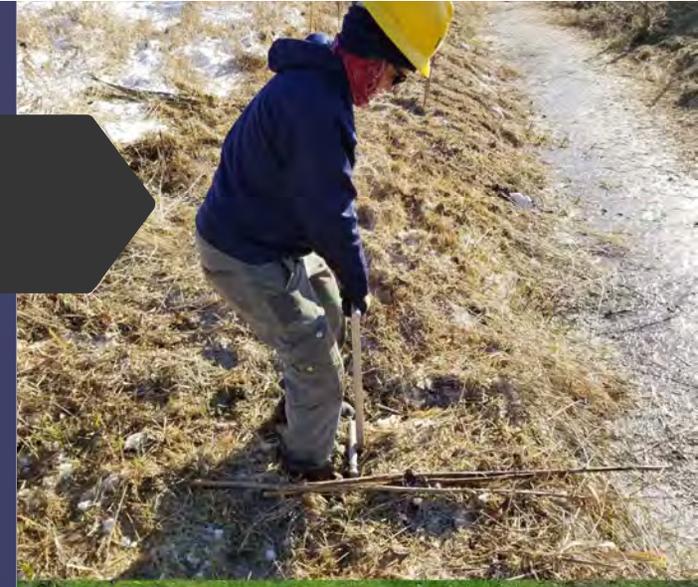
Duplexes are equal to two ESU's per month.
Undeveloped parcels are not charged.

All other parcels are charged based on the total amount of impervious surface area divided by the impervious area of one ESU (3,200 square feet) rounded to the nearest whole number and multiplied by the rate (\$14.22) per ESU.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{ESU/Month} &= (\text{Sqft.Area} / \text{ESU.Sqft}) \times \text{ESU.Rate} \\ &= (32,000 \text{ Sqft} / 3,200 \text{ Sqft}) \times \$14.22 \\ &= \$142.20 \text{ per month}\end{aligned}$$

5. I am not connected to any stormwater system, there is no drainage system where I live, and I don't have any runoff, why should I have to pay a stormwater fee?

- ▶ Although you may not be directly connected to a stormwater system, you are provided service through the Stormwater Management Program. These services include:
 - ▶ Water quality improvements.
 - ▶ Drainage system road protection.
 - ▶ Regional Flood Protection for home & business.
- ▶ The program is based on the principle that we all have impervious area that contributes directly or indirectly to stormwater runoff.
- ▶ It is essential that everyone contributes to stormwater solutions.
- ▶ Pictured: WCC member planting along creeks.





6. How do the Stormwater fees help with water quality?

- ▶ Stormwater utility fees provide services that improve water quality, such as:
 - ▶ Emergency response to hazardous spills.
 - ▶ Identifying and eliminating illicit connections or dumping.
 - ▶ Cleaning sediments and pollutants from storm basins and drainage facilities.
 - ▶ Waterway debris and trash removal activities.
 - ▶ Treatment and removal of invasive aquatic vegetation.

6. How do Stormwater fees help with water quality?

- Stormwater utility fees provide services that improve water quality, such as:
- Long-term monitoring to assess trends and effectiveness of water quality controls.
 - Providing public education information and resources.
 - Designing, constructing and maintaining stormwater drainage facilities.
 - Implementation of Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control inspection and enforcement.

Pictured; Skagit Stream Team of Skagit Conservation District.



6. How do Stormwater fees help with water quality?



- ▶ Finally, fees pay for preventative maintenance vegetation control - mitigation activities.

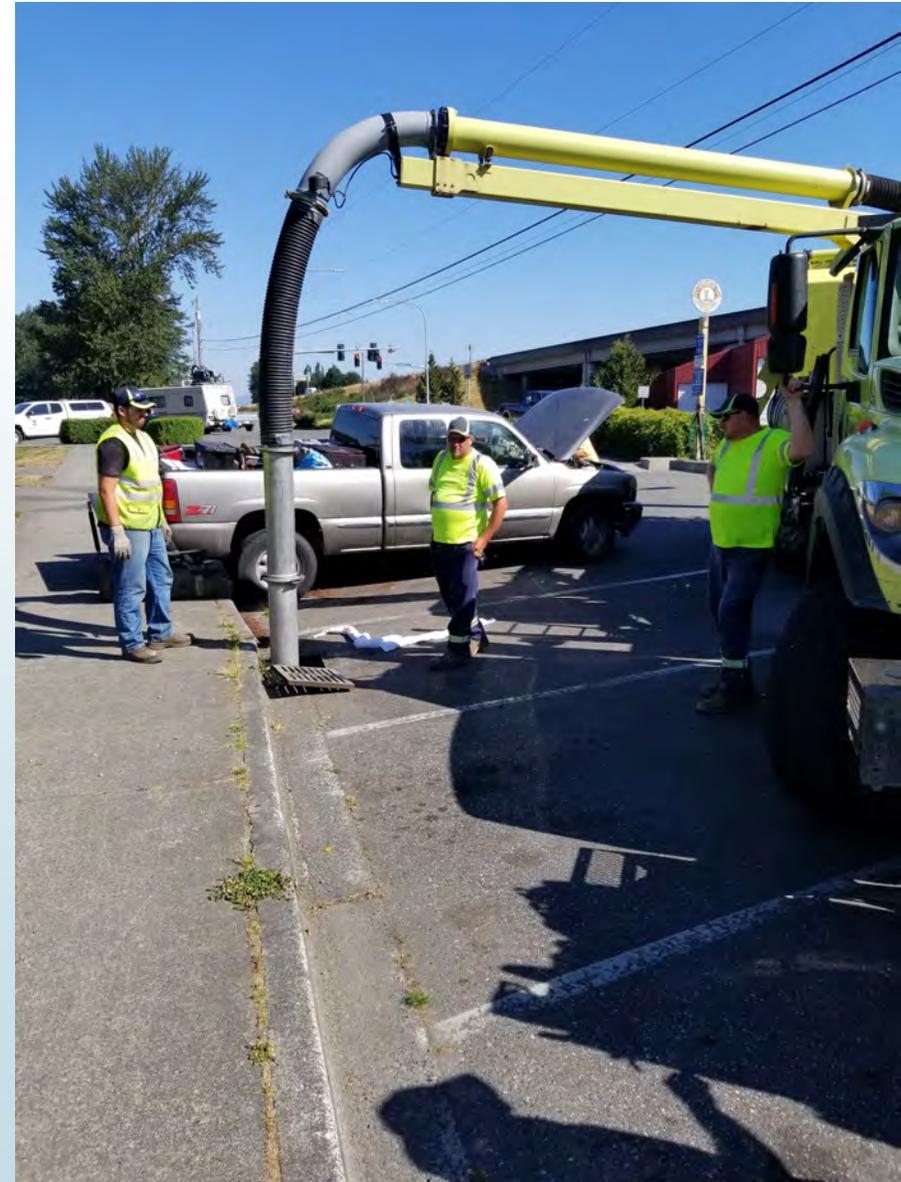
7. How often does the City clean catch basins and stormwater conveyance systems?

- ▶ City goal is to clean every city-maintained catch basin within a two-year timeframe. Storm basins and drain lines are cleaned if excessive sediment is observed.
- ▶ The Collection Crew is able to video drain lines to assess their integrity and determine if repairs or cleaning are required.



Pictured: Right: Illicit Discharge vactor operations at Lions Park along Freeway Drive

Below: Vactor operations at a catch basin sump drain.



Questions or Comments.

- ▶ If you have questions or comments, feel free to call us at (360) 336-6204.
- ▶ Email at MVengineering@mountvernonwa.gov
- ▶ We all live downstream!

