



City of Johns Creek

# Stormwater Utility Credit Manual

2023 Edition



# Stormwater Credit Manual

Stormwater is rainfall that runs over property and does not infiltrate into the ground. As more development has occurred across Johns Creek, the amount of stormwater runoff has increased because there is less vegetated area to soak up the rainfall. Additionally, pollutants (such as oil from roadways and fertilizers from lawns and golf courses) and sediment from stream and creek banks can impair water quality.

Johns Creek implemented a Stormwater Utility to provide a dedicated funding means to provide for the maintenance, repair, and improvement of the stormwater structures and conveyances. The Stormwater Utility is funded by a fee, which is assessed to all properties in Johns Creek based on the amount of runoff area on a property which is a weighted calculation considering impervious area (hard surfaces, buildings, decks, parking lots, etc.) and overall size of a property. Additional information about the Stormwater Utility is available on the City's website [www.johnscreekga.gov](http://www.johnscreekga.gov).

Stormwater credits are offered as incentives to property owners for being good stewards of Johns Creek's stormwater system. In return for positive actions to help the stormwater system, property owners can apply to receive credits against their stormwater utility bill.

This Stormwater Credit Manual is designed to describe the credits available as well as detail the application process, application deadlines, application review process, and awarding of credits.

## Eligibility

The credit program has been developed to include credits for all customers including residential property owners. Property owners with questions about the applicability of credits to their particular property are encouraged to contact [stormwaterutility@johnscreekga.gov](mailto:stormwaterutility@johnscreekga.gov) or call 678-512-3200.

## Maximum Credit Amounts

The maximum user fee credit most property owners can receive is 40%. Residents who qualify for the Offsite Stormwater Management Credit can receive an extra 10% credit (maximum credit of 50%).

## Credits Available

Twelve credits are available: (1) No Direct Discharge, (2) Offsite Stormwater Management, (3) Watershed Improvement Project, (4) Stream Cleanup Participation, (5) Septic Tank Maintenance, (6) Stormwater Education Program, (7) Detention Ponds, (8) Commercial Pollution Containment, (9) Industrial Facilities Compliance, (10) Forest Preservation, (11) Soil Restoration, and (12) Large Pervious Parcels.

### 1. No Direct Discharge – up to 40%

Property owners whose stormwater runoff does not flow through any portion of the public stormwater system owned, operated, or maintained by Johns Creek can qualify for up to a 40% credit. This credit is applicable to property owners whose property directly borders the Chattahoochee River. Additionally this credit is applicable to property owners whose property border is the City border where runoff from their property discharges outside the City limits.

**Required documentation:** Submit a credit application and a simple site map (one can be printed from Creekview, the City's Geographic Information Systems database: <https://gis.johnscreekga.gov/creekview/>) showing the location of the property with direct border to the Chattahoochee River and or another community.

### 2. Offsite Stormwater Management – 10%

Property owners who have stormwater facilities or ponds that collect and detain stormwater runoff from outside of their property can qualify for a 10% credit. This credit is available to homeowners associations and individual parcels that drain to the pond as long as the offsite area is equal to or greater than the area of the property or subdivision that the pond services.

**Required documentation:** Submit a credit application and a simple site map (one can be printed from Creekview, the City's Geographic Information Systems database: <https://gis.johnscreekga.gov/creekview/>) showing the location of the property, the stormwater facility or pond, and delineating the drainage area that contributes to the stormwater facility or pond.

### **3. Watershed Improvement Project – 10%**

Johns Creek is regularly making improvements to the stormwater system. For property owners directly affected by a City watershed improvement project and participate (by providing an easement or right-of-way to the City), the property owner can qualify for a 10% credit for a five-year period.

**Required documentation:** *Submit a credit application and a signed copy of the easement or right-of-way dedication to the City identifying the Watershed Improvement Project.*

### **4. Stream Cleanup Participation – 10%**

For property owners taking part in qualified stream cleanup event (or an Adopt-a-Road event designed to keep trash out of streams) may be eligible for a 10% credit. Examples of qualifying events include stream cleanups hosted by Autrey Mill Nature Preserve, Chattahoochee Riverkeepers, Keep North Fulton Beautiful, Rivers Alive or other events that are in accordance with Adopt-A-Stream or Adopt-A-Road guidelines.

**Required documentation:** *Submit a credit application and a screen print out or confirmation email of event registration and photograph of participation in the event.*

### **5. Septic Tank Maintenance – 10%**

For residential property with a septic system, property owners can be awarded a credit by having their septic tank pumped out every five years (as recommended by the Fulton County Board of Health). Septic tanks that are not regularly pumped accumulate sludge. If sludge is not removed, it can build up to a point where it will discharge into the drain field where it then clogs the drain lines causing failure and discharge of sewage onto the ground. By submitting documentation in the form of a receipt or invoice for tank pumping from a licensed hauler of septic wastes, homeowners may be eligible for a 10% credit. This annual 10% credit may be available for up to 5 years after the date the septic tank was pumped, however any unclaimed years between the date of the pumping and the date of the credit application will not be eligible for any backdated credit. These unclaimed years also cannot be used to extend the credit beyond its expiration date, which is set at 5 years after the date the septic tank was pumped.

**Required documentation:** *Submit a credit application and a copy of a dated invoice showing the septic tank was pumped.*

### **6. Stormwater Education Program – up to 10%**

Property owners that are also schools (as defined by Official Annotated Code of Georgia Code § 20-2-690) are eligible for up to a 10% credit if they teach an approved stormwater education program. The program should address stormwater runoff/pollution prevention, stormwater quantity management, water quality, water conservation, and/or recycling. The per-parcel credit may not total more than 10% and credit may only be applied to the property where the educational activities are taught. Credits cannot be applied to administrative facilities, bus lots, parking lots that are not associated with the educational facility, or warehouse/facility operations related parcels.

**Required documentation:** *Submit a credit application and documentation summarizing the curriculum taught addressing stormwater education, number of students taught the stormwater education lessons versus total enrolled students, and simple site map identifying the property where the stormwater educational activities were taught.*

### **7. Detention Ponds – up to 40% credit**

For property served by a detention pond (like a home inside a subdivision with a detention pond), if the detention pond was designed, built, and is maintained to effectively manage stormwater, then the property owner may be eligible for up to 40% credit.

**Required documentation:** *Submit a credit application and a copy of the fully executed and recorded Operations and Maintenance Agreement for the stormwater detention pond, the original design of the stormwater pond or hydrology report (to show how the stormwater pond was designed to function and designed storage capacity), a professional engineer's report specific to the pond, and an executed right-of-entry agreement in favor of the City. The professional engineer's report should include the total drainage area for the pond, site plan indicating all pond components, current condition of all pond components, identification of which of the Unified Stormwater Sizing Criteria (from the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual) are provided by the pond, and certification from the engineer that the detention pond is functioning as designed.*

## 8. Commercial Pollution Containment – 10%

Some commercial properties that generate higher levels of pollutants (such as oil, grease, and hydrocarbons) based on their land use (such as gas stations, vehicle washing businesses, large parking lots, and outdoor material storage areas). Commercial properties may be awarded up to a 10% credit by documenting their efforts to implement stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP) to address the non-point source pollutions that could originate on their property (if they are not already required to be mitigated through a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit).

**Required documentation:** *Submit a credit application and documentation of the original design and installation of the BMP device (such as oil/water separator, oil/water/grit separators; or sand filters), a professional engineer's report documenting compliance of the BMP device with the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual, and executed right-of-entry agreement in favor of the City. If the original design and installation documentation for the BMP device is not available, that information can be covered in the professional engineer's report.*

## 9. Industrial Facilities Compliance – 10%

Industrial property owners that comply with applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Industrial Stormwater General Permit requirements may be awarded up to a 10% credit by documenting their compliance with the NPDES requirements.

**Required documentation:** *Submit a credit application and a copy of the current NPDES permit, most recent annual compliance report, copy of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, and executed right-of-entry agreement in favor of the City.*

## 10. Forest Preservation – 20%

The preservation of undisturbed natural forestland can help to improve water quality within a built-out environment. Forests are defined as natural areas of dense undisturbed tree canopy with understory vegetation. The Forest Preservation credit is available to property owners with more than 2.0 acres (87,120 square feet) of property. To qualify, the forested land on the property must be contiguous and must account for more than half of the total parcel area for the 20% credit.

**Required documentation:** *Submit a credit application and a simple site map (one can be printed from Creekview, the City's Geographic Information Systems database: <https://gis.johnscreekgga.gov/creekview/>) showing the entire property, a measurement of the contiguous forested land on the property (Creekview has a land measurement tool), and executed right-of-entry agreement in favor of the City.*

## 11. Soil Restoration – up to 10%

Soil is an important component of stormwater management. It not only supports trees, shrubs, lawns, and gardens, but also can help regulate stormwater runoff. Compacted soils can act like pavement and lead to additional runoff whereas restored soil can act as a sponge. Soil restoration is accomplished by tilling in compost or other soil amendments, such as worm castings, to a recommended depth of 18". This not only improves the nutrient density of the existing soil, but also increases stormwater infiltration, which can help to improve water quality and reduce runoff within a built-out environment. These restored areas should be planted immediately (grass, shrubs, or trees) to prevent soil erosion from occurring. The Soil Restoration credit is available to property owners with more than 1.0 acre (43,560 square feet) of property. To qualify, the soil must be amended on more than half of the total parcel area for the 10% credit on their stormwater utility fee.

**Required documentation:** *Submit a credit application and a simple site map (one can be printed from Creekview, the City's Geographic Information Systems database: <https://gis.johnscreekgga.gov/creekview/>) showing the entire property, a measurement of the contiguous area on which soil was amended on the property (Creekview has a land measurement tool), and executed right-of-entry agreement in favor of the City.*

## 12. Large Pervious Parcels – 40%

Large parcels of land that have a small amount of impervious surface relative to pervious surface can reduce the impacts of runoff to the public stormwater system. Individual parcels (or a combination of adjoining parcels with the same ownership) that are 100-acres or more and have less than 5% impervious surface qualify for the Large Pervious Parcels credit.

**Required documentation:** *Submit a credit application and a simple site map (one can be printed from Creekview, the City's Geographic Information Systems database: <https://gis.johnscreekgga.gov/creekview/>) showing the entire property or combination of adjoining properties with the same ownership, a calculation of the percent impervious surface, and an executed right-of-entry agreement in favor of the City.*

## Credit Application

All property owners requesting credit must complete and submit the Stormwater Utility Fee Credit Application using the form provided in the Appendix. One application may cover several credit types for a single property. Multiple billing addresses may be considered on the same application for regional credits (such as No Direct Discharge, Offsite Stormwater Management, and Detention Ponds) if accompanied by a spreadsheet including all parcel numbers and billing addresses covered by the application. Of note, the application form must be signed by an individual person who is responsible for the property and/or payment of the stormwater utility bill. If the responsible person is not an individual but a government entity, religious institution, corporation or LLC, then the form must be signed by an officer, director, partner, or registered agent with authority to execute instruments for the property.

Return the completed form with any required supporting documentation to:

City of Johns Creek  
Department of Public Works  
Attn: Stormwater Utility Manager  
11360 Lakefield Drive  
Johns Creek, GA 30097

## Timing of Application Review

Applications must be received by December 31 in order to be considered for the next billing year (which begins July 1). The City intends that most applications will be reviewed and responses made within thirty days of receipt of the application. However, if analysis requires significant review time or if the number of applications received is large such (such as around the submittal deadline) the review period may exceed the typical review period.

## Awarding of Partial Credits

The majority of the credits for which property owners can apply are awarded in whole not in part. For example, if a residential property owner is served by a septic tank and they submit a credit application and a dated invoice showing they had their septic tank pump, the property owner will receive a 10% credit.

Three of the credits – No Direct Discharge, Stormwater Education Program, and Detention Ponds – are awarded based on the extent to which they meet certain criteria.

For the No Direct Discharge credit, the total 40% credit is applicable if the City review confirms the entire stormwater runoff from the property does not flow through the stormwater system owned, operated, or maintained by Johns Creek. If only a portion of the property drains to the City's stormwater system and half the property drains to another jurisdiction's system, the property would be eligible for a 20% (or half of 40%) credit.

For the Stormwater Education Program credit, the percentage of the 10% credit awarded is based on the percentage of enrolled students that have completed the stormwater education program. At least 25% of the students must have completed the stormwater education program to receive 5% credit. At least 50% of the students must have completed the stormwater education program to receive 10% credit.

For the Detention Pond credit, the first 10% (of the 40% credit) is for water quality as a properly designed, built, and maintained detention pond can improve water quality. The first 10% for water quality will be awarded if the detention pond is designed to retain the first 1.0 inch of rainfall on the site using runoff reduction methods or the detention pond is designed to remove at least 80% of the calculated average annual post-development total suspended solids (TSS) load or equivalent as defined in the GSMM for runoff from a 1.2 inch rainfall event. The second 10% (of the 40% credit) is for channel protection in that a properly designed, built, and maintained detention pond can protect the stream channel from erosion by detaining water. The second 10% will be awarded if the detention pond provides extended detention of the 1-year storm event released over a period of 24 hours to reduce bankfull flows and protect downstream channels from erosive velocities and unstable conditions. The third 10% (of the 40% credit) is for overbank flood protection in that a properly designed, built, and maintained detention pond can detain water to reduce the chance of downstream flooding over the banks of creeks and streams for 25-year storm events. The third 10% will be awarded if the detention pond provides peak discharge control of the 25-year storm event such that the post-development peak rate does not exceed the predevelopment rate to reduce overbank flooding. The fourth and final 10% (of the 40% credit) is for extreme flood protection in that a properly deigned, built, and maintained detention pond can reduce the chance of downstream flooding for 100-year storm events. The fourth and final 10% of the credit will be awarded if the detention pond provides peak discharge control of the 100-year storm event such that the post-development peak rate does not exceed the pre-development rate to reduce extreme event flooding. development rate to reduce extreme event flooding.



## **Renewing Credits**

All of the credits except the Stream Cleanup Participation and Stormwater Education credits have a term of five years. For renewal of a credit application, a new application must be submitted on the same application deadline as new applications (see Timing of Application Review). In the accompanying supporting documentation, the applicant should note if any substantive changes have occurred on the property related to the credit application, or if applicable to the associated drainage area. Failure to re-apply will result in loss of the credit.

## **Inspection of Stormwater Facilities**

The City of Johns Creek reserves the right to periodically inspect stormwater facilities for which right-of-entry easements are required (such as Detention Ponds, Commercial Pollution Containment, and Industrial Facilities Compliance) to ensure utility requirements are being followed and the credit still applies. Uncorrected deficiencies cited during the term of the credit will result in the loss of the credit for each billing year the deficiency remains uncorrected. For the Forest Preservation credit, clearing areas within the forest preservation area will nullify the credit and may prevent acceptance of a future credit application for Forest Preservation.

Credit Application continues next page.

# Stormwater Utility Fee - Credit Application

Parcel ID Number \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner (if different) \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (if different) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

	Credit Category	Maximum Credit	Requested	Approved	Term (Years)
1	No Direct Discharge	up to 40%			5
2	Offsite Stormwater Management	10%			5
3	Watershed Improvement Project	10%			5
4	Stream Cleanup Participation	10%			1
5	Septic Tank Maintenance	10%			5
6	Stormwater Education Program	up to 10%			1
7	Detention Ponds	up to 40%			5
8	Commercial Pollution Containment	10%			5
9	Industrial Facilities Compliance	10%			5
10	Forest Preservation	20%			5
11	Soil Restoration	up to 10%			5
12	Large Pervious Parcels	40%			5
	Total Percent Credit Applied				

I hereby request City of Johns Creek to review this application for a stormwater credit(s). I further authorize the City to investigate the site characteristics of the identified parcel for the purpose of evaluation for a stormwater credit(s). I certify that I am authority to make such a request and grant such authority for City staff to evaluate this property for the purposes of approving or denying the requested credit. The attached information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I agree to provide corrected information should there be any change in the information provided herein.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Please return completed form with any required supporting documentation to the City of Johns Creek, Attn: Stormwater Utility Manager, 11360 Lakefield Drive, Johns Creek, GA 30097*

The following section is for staff use:

Application Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved

Denied

by \_\_\_\_\_

Application Notified: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Stormwater Utility Manager

# City of Johns Creek Right-of-Entry Agreement

STATE OF GEORGIA, FULTON COUNTY

I/We \_\_\_\_\_, the owner and/or tenant (circle which one or both) of the property commonly identified as \_\_\_\_\_, City of Johns Creek, Fulton County, State of Georgia, do hereby grant and give freely and without coercion, the right of access and entry to said property to City of Johns Creek, its agents, contractors, and subcontractors thereof, for the purpose of performing necessary evaluations of onsite stormwater facilities, controls and site activities related to stormwater runoff management on the \_\_\_\_\_ (hereinafter "facility") located on Land Lot \_\_\_\_\_ in City of Johns Creek, Georgia.

The undersigned agrees and warrants to waive and hold harmless City of Johns Creek, its agents, employees, contractors, and subcontractors, for damage of any type, or any claim or action, either legal or equitable that might arise out of any activities on the above described property that are conducted by City of Johns Creek, its agents, employees, contractors and subcontractors, pursuant to this Agreement.

In consideration of this Right-of-Entry Agreement and the rights granted to City of Johns Creek herein, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, City of Johns Creek agrees, to perform only visual evaluations, and review pertinent facility records and information, necessary to verify stormwater user fee credit eligibility. I/We, will not/have not receive(d) any compensation for this Right-of-Entry Agreement.

For the considerations and purposes set forth herein, I set my hand this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Operator or Owner (identify which one)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
My Commission Expires

## City Acknowledgement:

\_\_\_\_\_  
SW Utility Manager