



TOWN OF BLUFFTON NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES) PLAN REVIEW AND INSPECTION FEES TO BE INSTITUTED IN FISCAL YEAR 2021

BACKGROUND:

To support the implementation of May River Watershed Action Plan projects and programs to restore and protect water quality, the May River Watershed Action Plan Advisory Committee unanimously recommended on December 9, 2019 that Town Council evaluate and consider implementing additional funding mechanisms as a priority in the Town of Bluffton’s Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2021 – 2022.

A common potential revenue source for municipalities is stormwater permit and inspection fees to offset costs incurred while maintaining compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits under the Clean Water Act. Each jurisdiction or entity designated a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) by SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) is issued a NPDES permit which requires six (6) major programmatic elements. One programmatic element regulates development activities. This program requires proper stormwater management plan reviews prior to issuance of a stormwater permit, and also requires regular sediment and erosion control inspections with escalating enforcement measures for compliance with federal, state, and local standards.

Based on information from comparable MS4 municipalities within South Carolina, Staff proposed the following NPDES Fees (Table 1) for Town Council’s consideration during the FY 2021 budget process:

Table 1. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Plan Review and Inspection Fees for Fiscal Year 2021

| Development Activity | NPDES Stormwater Plan Review Fee | NPDES Stormwater Plan Amendment / Resubmittal Fee | NPDES Sediment & Erosion Control Inspection & Re-Inspection Fees (Per Inspection) | NPDES Sediment & Erosion Control Re-Inspection Resulting from Notice of Violation Fees | Waiver Request |
|---|----------------------------------|---|---|--|----------------|
| Residential <1 acre (not part of Subdivision) | Exempt | Exempt | \$25/ inspection | \$100.00/ inspection until compliant \$200 to remove Stop Work Order | Exempt |
| Residential (Single Family or Subdivision), Multi-family, or Non-residential per disturbed acre (rounded up to the next whole acre) | \$250 (\$5,000 max.) | \$150 (\$2,500 max.) | 0.0-0.999 acres = \$150 1.0-5.0 acres = \$250 5.01-10.0 acres = \$350 10.01+ acres = \$450 (Per inspection) | \$150.00/ inspection until compliant \$250 to remove Stop Work Order | \$350 |

Town Council unanimously approved instituting these new fees on June 9, 2020 for Fiscal Year 2021 and will begin collecting stormwater permit review and inspection fees on July 1, 2020.



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STORMWATER PERMIT PROCESS AND FEES BEGINNING JULY 1, 2020:

- A. Growth Management Preliminary Review and Development Review Committee (DRC) Meeting:
 1. Once the preliminary review is approved, a Stormwater Plan Review can begin per the process below.
- B. Stormwater Plan Review Process:

The design professional will contact the Town of Bluffton through the Customer Self Service (CSS) Portal and upload all Stormwater Plan Review documents.

 1. The CSS Portal will generate required fees at check-in and the applicant can pay online (See NPDES Fee Schedule in Table 1). This may need to be manually calculated by Watershed until CSS comes fully online.
 2. The Watershed Management Division will check that all required items are provided for issuance of a Stormwater Permit. This includes the Town of Bluffton (ToB) Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (C-SWPPP) Application for Stormwater Permit, the Stormwater Plan Review Checklist, and any other required documents (see Stormwater Checklist).
 - a. Review timeframes are 15 business days once all fees are paid.
 3. Watershed Management will send any stormwater plan review comments back to the design professional or applicant by email.
 4. Stormwater Plan Review Resubmittals will respond to any comments and shall provide all documents that were requested by Town staff.
 - a. This process will take place through the Town's CSS Portal with appropriate resubmittal fees (See Table 1).
 - b. Review timeframes for resubmittals are 15 business days once all fees are paid.
 5. Once a Stormwater Plan is approved by the Watershed Management Division, Town staff will provide the applicant with a Conditional MS4 approval for the project pending SCDHEC approval.
 6. The Watershed Management Division will only issue its Final MS4 approval letter and Stormwater Permit after:
 - a. Official SCDHEC project approval is received, and SCDHEC's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (DHEC-OCRM) Coastal Zone Consistency (CZC) approval is received.
 7. Once a Town Development and Stormwater Permits have been issued, land disturbance can begin after:
 - a. A pre-construction (pre-con) meeting is conducted (The Watershed Management Division is the lead), and
 - b. A pre-clearing (pre-clear) meeting is conducted (The Watershed Management Division is the lead).

Attachments:

1. ToB Stormwater C-SWPPP Application
2. ToB Stormwater Affidavit
3. ToB Stormwater Review Checklist