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## Revised Permit Fees

The Sauk River Watershed District (SRWD) Board of Managers has revised the Permit Fee Schedule upon recommendation from their Rules Committee. The committee spent several months researching and analyzing the fee structure of the program and the overall cost to operate it. They reviewed all permits from 2018 thru 2020 and found that smaller projects were paying a higher fee per square foot of impact, than the larger projects. They also found that the fee schedule was only covering about half of the expense to administer the program, with the other half being subsidized by the General Administration budget.

As a result of this research, the committee recommended, and the Board of Managers agreed, that the fees be based on the square foot of impact a project would have. For an Erosion Control Permit, the fee is now \$0.02 for every square foot of disturbed surface planned for the project, with the minimum fee of \$150 and the maximum fee of \$500 remaining the same. The fee for a Stormwater Permit is \$0.02 per square foot of impervious surface to be created, with the minimum fee of \$1,500 remaining the same and the maximum fee now being \$8,000, up from the previous \$7,000.

Two other changes were also recommended and approved. Any work within the Right of Way of a Public Drainage System (a system established through Minnesota Statutes 103E), requires a permit from the SRWD and the fee was set at \$100. This is a change from charging for the time spent processing the application and billing for it after the permit is issued. The committee felt this was much simpler, less complicated, and more efficient from an administrative standpoint.

The other change was to add the General Permit Inspection Fee of \$100. A General Permit is issued when another permitting entity has issued a permit where their requirements meet or exceed the SRWD requirements. This avoids duplication of permitting efforts and fee charges to the applicant. The SRWD policy treats these permits like any other permit they would issue themselves, when it comes to inspections for compliance with the SRWD standards. Therefore the committee felt it appropriate to institute the fee to account for the costs incurred for the inspections.

These changes are projected to make the program self-sufficient, and have the fees distributed in a more equitable manner. The Board of Managers also agreed to review the permit program revenue and expenses on an annual basis, to determine if any adjustments need to be made to the fee schedule. "The permitting program is a tool that the SRWD has implemented, to assist its residents with protecting the water and soil resources while conducting development type activities." said Jon Roeschlein, Ditch and Permit Manager. "The program is not in place to stop progress, rather to educate and assist with progress in a way that protects and even improves the water quality in our watershed."

The new fee schedule can be found in the Permit Application Packet on the SRWD website, [www.srwdmn.org](http://www.srwdmn.org). Contact the Sauk River Watershed District office for further information or with questions. Phone: 320-352-2231; Email: [jon@srwdmn.org](mailto:jon@srwdmn.org).

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