



Board of Collier County Commissioners

Donna Fiala
District 1

Andy Solis, Esq.
District 2

Burt L. Saunders
District 3

Penny Taylor
District 4

William L. McDaniel, J
District 5

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Dear Collier County Taxpayers,

This letter is to bring you up to date on the Stormwater Utility Fee and the reason it is needed. Before the recession, in the years 2005, 2006, 2007... the budget for stormwater maintenance and improvements was approximately \$15M for the unincorporated areas County-wide.

When the recession hit, the County Commission not only lowered millage rate. By the way, that millage rate remains at the same rate today. What Collier County did, also, was to let go of approximately 325 people. And deferred maintenance became the norm. In other words, we really, really tightened our belt.

The stormwater maintenance and improvement program suffered greatly and we became reactive instead of proactive to the stormwater challenges we faced. The result was that it cost the taxpayers more money for stormwater repairs. Emergency repairs always cost more!

Maintenance also suffered. Consider this scenario:

Let's say the County cleaned out the swale in front of your house, completed the job, and then told you "see you in 57 years". I don't think you would be happy with this kind of service because after all it rains every summer doesn't it? **(the industry standard is 12.5 years – see attachment titled Current System Maintenance).**

What happened ???

The stormwater budget was cut by almost two-thirds in 2008 and has remained at that level (\$±7M). Today there are 65,000 more people living in Collier County before the recession and now, we have the challenges of Red Tide and Blue-Green Algae along our coastline.

The proposed Stormwater Utility Fee includes funding for new projects designed to divert stormwater from private property and the improvement of the quality of the water that is being conveyed. Proposed stormwater projects and maintenance accomplished by staff will be rigorously reviewed every year by the Commission to ensure your tax dollars are being spent wisely. The monies collected by the Stormwater Utility Fee are governed by law. This money cannot be used for any other purpose except stormwater projects and maintenance.

Proposed stormwater utility fee

County commissioners will vote on a proposed new fee following a final **Public Hearing** this Thursday, September 6, beginning at 5:05 PM in Commission Chambers ([directions](#)). Click [here](#) for the meeting agenda and related materials.

Learn more, including the proposed fee to be charged for your property, at collierstormwater.com.

- **Brent Batten: Stormwater fee brings flash flood of opposition from Golden Gate Estates.** An oft-voiced complaint is that people weren't adequately notified about the fee. They also fault the methodology that counts gravel and shell driveways the same as paved areas, and point out that the plan does not give credit for the fact that large lots tend to absorb water before it runs off into the county drainage system. [Naples Daily News](#), 8/23/18
- **Brent Batten: Stormwater tax passes easily — in Texas. In Collier, maybe not so much.** Some residents of Collier County are finding that the stormwater fee, while technically not a tax, would increase the amount they pay to the county annually by 10 percent or more. Bill McDaniel is the only one of the five Collier County commissioners who has not gone along with the stormwater fee so far. [Naples Daily News](#), 8/28/18
- **Brent Batten: Add a stormwater fee in Collier? What a difference a year makes.** A year ago, Hurricane Harvey dumped up to 18 inches of rain on parts of Southwest Florida, filling swales and flooding low-lying streets. An already taxed drainage system was unable to shunt the water along, creating a backlog that lingered for weeks. [Naples Daily News](#), 8/25/18

Provided by: Sparker's Soapbox

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