

Stormwater FAQ

What is an impervious surface?

Impervious surface is any hard surface that will not allow rainwater to soak through into the ground. Examples are roof top, sidewalks, driveways (concrete or asphalt). Rainwater runs off impervious surfaces until it reaches a surface such as grass or dirt where it begins to soak in.

How do you determine how much impervious surface is on my property?

Measure all sidewalks, driveway, parking area, rooftop or any other hard surface that will not allow water to soak through to the ground. Adding all these surfaces together forms a total square footage of impervious surface.

Is the amount of impervious surface on my property the same as the square footage of my house?

The impervious surface on your property will be larger than the square footage of your home or business because it includes not only the heated space but the driveway, parking area, sidewalk, patio, and any other hard surface that you may have.

What is stormwater runoff?

Stormwater runoff is the excess water from rainfall that doesn't soak into the ground but flows after a precipitation event.

Why do we need to manage stormwater?

Some runoff is natural, but it has become a problem because of changes to the land. We have built hard (or impervious) surfaces, which prevent rainwater from being absorbed into the ground. This means that there is more runoff, causing flooding, and the runoff is more polluted, degrading our streams. Stormwater receives no treatment before entering our streams. It doesn't go to the sewage treatment plant. It carries debris, trash, and pollutants as it runs over hard surfaces and into the stormwater system of pipes, ditches, streams and lakes. Many parts of Cartersville have stormwater pipes that are 100 years old! Our system is deteriorating and undersized in older areas for our modern lifestyles. We are also facing numerous unfunded state and federal mandates to control these problems and meet water quality standards. If we do

nothing, flooding and pollution will continue to increase as our city grows and our quality of life will decrease.