

FACT SHEET

King County Water and Land Resources Division Surface Water Management Fee School Discount Program

King County Water and Land Resources Division - Our Role

The King County Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD) brings together a variety of King County programs focused on clean water, open space, healthy fish and wildlife, and flood risk reduction. The Surface Water Management Program was established in 1987 and is funded through service charges. It is a WLRD program working to reduce flooding, erosion, water pollution, and habitat damage caused by stormwater runoff through planning, maintenance, and public education.

Surface Water Management Fee School Discount Program

The Surface Water Management (SWM) Fee School Discount program allows school districts in the service area to apply for a waiver of the annual fee based on:

- Documentation of education activities about surface water management.
- Completion of maintenance corrections to the district's stormwater and water quality drainage facilities and implementation of source control, pollution prevention practices. Maintenance corrections are determined by an inspection performed by King County personnel and documented in a Maintenance Correction letter sent to each district for each district-owned facility. Pollution prevention practices are documented in letters sent to the district after a water quality site audit is completed by King County staff.

The School Discount program supports school districts in providing curricula that encourage community stewardship of local water resources. School district properties, like other properties with impervious surfaces, contribute to surface water problems, but schools can also help King County meet its community education goals. The program benefits the public in two ways: school district funds that would be spent on the SWM fees can be used for education and students learn how to protect and appreciate water resources.

Qualifying Curricula

Curricula that may qualify for a fee waiver include those which address:

- the plants and wildlife of wetlands, native plants, streams and rivers
- the hydrologic cycle
- the salmon life cycle
- human influences and pollution
- weather and flooding
- watershed studies

- the effects of urbanization of water quality
- hands-on activities such as testing water quality, conducting outdoor investigations, raising native plants, and monitoring or revegetating ponds or streams.

Any grade level's curriculum is acceptable. Classes and activities from any school within the district are eligible. The credit applies to all school district properties regardless of use. The dollar amount of credit is determined by a formula using the number of classrooms, number of class hours, and hourly class cost. King County provides School District Surface Water Management Credit Request Form to districts each year.

Examples of King County Approved Curriculum Topics

The hydrologic cycle – This includes the water cycle, where water goes, rainfall and its functions in the system, what happens to water as it moves through cities and landforms, and human influences.

Wetlands, streams, rivers, lakes, and their ecological systems – This includes how water moves through, and with, these bodies of water and landforms, what the area does for ecosystems, and human influences.

The effects of urbanization on surface water quality and quantity – This includes discussion on cities as well as farms and rural land, human influences in any area on any natural system, and green infrastructure..

Water pollution both point and non-point sources – Human influences on water in terms of direct pollution causes (dumping, littering) and indirect pollution causes (e.g., leaks, storm drains).

Land use effects on runoff and stormwater – The effects of human influences in terms of how we use land specifically: impervious and pervious surfaces; farming and livestock; illegal dumping; motor vehicles and other modes of transportation; and rain gardens.

The causes and effects of flooding – Weather patterns specific to Washington as it relates to precipitation and its flow through ecosystems, streams and rivers.

Salmonids (salmon and trout) – Life cycle, habitat requirements, and fisheries, preferably with human influence or water use/impact emphasis.

Wetland plants/native plants and their benefits to our waterways – The benefits to our ecosystem and the roles of native and invasive plant.

Studies of the watershed or stream basin in which the school or district is located – Definition of a watershed, location of different watersheds, or other watershed studies.

Water and carbon sequestration – Water’s role in the carbon cycle and energy practices that are carbon neutral.

King County Green Schools Program – Level Three: Water conservation and pollution prevention. Level Three of the program is focused on water conservation and pollution prevention best practices for schools.

King County Stormwater Management Rebate Amount

All rebate requests should be in hourly quantities. Please specify the amount of hours spent per classroom. Only time spent on one of the approved topics may be accounted for on the reporting sheet. Time spent on non related topics does not qualify.

Kits

Teachers may include all hours planning, preparing, and executing curriculum related to stormwater runoff and other approved topics toward the reported hours.

Informal educator programs – in classroom and field trips

Teachers may count the time the informal educator was conducting lessons and any time spent preparing the class for the visit or following up. Transportation time does not qualify.

Overnight programs

Teachers must count the hours spent only learning approved stormwater related topics, including pre- and post-lessons. Transportation and topics similar to but not applicable do not qualify.

Projects

Teachers may count all hours students spend planning, learning, preparing, and executing the project. Transportation does not qualify.

Online resources

Teachers may count time students spend researching and preparing for programs.

Videos

Teachers may count time spent watching videos related to stormwater runoff if the videos are a part of a lesson or have an activity paired with them.