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As mandated by federal Environmental Protection Agency's Stormwater Phase II program requirements, the City was required to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II stormwater permit from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). Permit requirements include system-wide erosion and sediment controls, pollution control, and public education initiatives.

If enacted, a stormwater utility will serve as an alternative to increasing taxes to meet the added expense of funding these requirements set by the federal government. The utility will apply only to the area inside the corporate limits of the city.

Under the proposal, Alcoa residences and businesses would first see stormwater fees appear on their April 1, 2008 bills at a rate of \$3.00 per month for Residential Units and \$4.00 per Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) per month for Commercial Units. For the City of Alcoa, one ERU equals 2,696 square feet of impervious surface, an area where water does not permeate the ground such as a driveway.

Alcoa's stormwater utility proposal is similar to many across the state that have been or are in the process of being adopted. The City of Maryville's stormwater utility began in 2005. Assistant Public Works Director and Chief Engineer Andrew Sonner said, "To help facilitate federal stormwater compliance, creating a stormwater utility provides a long-term, stable funding source for unfunded stormwater mandates from the Clean Water Act." Unlike a tax that could fund any number of city projects, all stormwater fees collected will fund only stormwater programs.

The stormwater utility ordinance passed its first reading at the Board of Commissioners meeting January 8, 2008. The Board of Commissioners meeting on Tuesday, February 12, 2008 is open to the public and interested citizens are encouraged to attend.

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