

**Flood Control Zone 9 (FCZ#9)
Ross Valley Flood & Watershed Program**

**Storm Drainage Fee
Frequently Asked Questions**

Updated: October 3, 2014

Q: What is the FCZ#9 Flood & Watershed Program?

A: Flood Control Zone 9 (FCZ#9) is comprised of all parcels of real estate within the Ross Valley watershed. It was created by the Board of Supervisors of the Marin County Flood Control & Water Conservation District (District) to improve flood protection in the Corte Madera Creek watershed. The 28-square mile watershed extends from Mt. Tamalpais and White's Hill through the communities of Fairfax, Sleepy Hollow, San Anselmo, Ross, Kentfield, Greenbrae, Larkspur and Corte Madera to San Francisco Bay. The watershed includes 44 miles of stream channels.

Q: Why do they call it FCZ#9?

A: FCZ#9 is a subarea of the District, which covers the entire county. Flood Control Zones were created in areas of the county that experienced frequent flooding prior to the formation of the zone. FCZ#9 was the ninth zone to be created.

Q: What is a storm drainage fee?

A: A fee is a charge imposed on an individual or business for a service or facility provided directly to an individual or business. The amount of a fee may not exceed the cost of government to provide the service. The storm drainage fee is to pay a portion of annual costs for flood protection programs.

Q: For what is the storm drainage fee used?

A: The fee revenue is being used to fund the Ross Valley Flood Protection and Watershed Program. The goal of this program is to manage stormwater so as to reduce the damage that may be caused by flooding during significant storm events.

Q: What basis does the Flood Control District have for imposing this fee?

A: The Health and Safety Code allows the County of Marin to charge a fee for acquiring, constructing, reconstructing, maintaining and operating storm drainage facilities. The fee was approved in a property-owner election in 2007 by a majority of those voting.

Q. My property doesn't flood, so why do I have to pay this fee?

A. Flooding affects everyone who lives in the Ross Valley. Runoff from uphill properties flows downhill, using the existing creek system as its drainage system. In the 2005 flood, more than \$90 million in damages were reported. Police, fire and emergency services could not function properly, local business owners lost merchandise, and schools, town halls, fire houses and many private residences had to be completely renovated. All of these have impacts on all communities in the watershed.

Q. How is the fee amount determined?

A. The fee is calculated based on parcel size, use code, the amount of impervious surface on the property, and the resulting amount of storm water runoff each property contributes to the storm drainage system. The fee rates can be found in this report:
http://marinwatersheds.org/rossvalleywatershed-org/documents/RossValleyFloodZone913-14AnnualStormDrainageFeeReport_001.pdf

Q: How is fee revenue collected?

A: Fees are collected as part of your annual property tax bill. The amount and duration of the fee is specified in the ballot measure which authorized the fee.

Q: When will the fee end?

A: The fee will last 20 years, terminating with fiscal year 2026-2027 which ends June 30, 2027.

Q. Is there an exemption for senior citizens?

A. No. The rate is based on the parcel square footage, impervious surfaces and the amount of rainfall runoff. There are no exemptions based on age.

Q. Where can I view my property's square footage?

A. Information regarding your tax bill and parcel characteristics can be found at the County of Marin website. Find your parcel number from your property tax bill and then try this link for the current measurement of your property's square footage:

<http://www.marincounty.org/depts/ar/divisions/assessor/search-assessor-records>