



# MANHATTAN BEACH STORM DRAIN MEASURE

## Storm Drains Protect Water Quality and Prevent Flooding

The City of Manhattan Beach's storm drain system collects and carries stormwater runoff directly to the ocean. A well-maintained storm drain system prevents trash, pollutants, and toxic chemicals from reaching the ocean, local beaches, and waterways. Storm drains also prevent sinkholes, floods, and other property damage.

## Manhattan Beach Storm Drains are Aging

Most storm drains in Manhattan Beach are over 50 years old. Many are in need of repair or replacement before they begin to fail and cause sinkholes or flooding in certain areas that can damage streets and private property. Storm drain maintenance and operations are funded by an annual fee charged to all property owners that has not been increased since it was created in 1996. This fixed funding only covers about 10% to 20% of the cost of maintaining and operating aging local storm drains.

## Locally Controlled Funding for Storm Drains

The City Council has proposed the Manhattan Beach Storm Drain Measure to enhance dedicated, locally controlled funding to repair, maintain, and operate local storm drains. This measure requires public approval through a vote of property owners.

## For more information

Visit: [www.manhattanbeach.gov/StormDrainMeasure](http://www.manhattanbeach.gov/StormDrainMeasure)

Call: (310) 802-5550

Email: [stormdrainmeasure@manhattanbeach.gov](mailto:stormdrainmeasure@manhattanbeach.gov)



What Goes IN the Drain



Comes OUT in the Ocean

Scan:



Manhattan Beach Storm Drain Fee Rates



# Storm Drains Protect the Ocean, Local Beaches, and Waterways from Pollution and Trash

## Information about the Manhattan Beach Storm Drain Measure

### Q. How does Manhattan Beach's local storm drain system work?

A. The Manhattan Beach storm drain system includes over 24 miles of pipes, hundreds of catch basins, streets, curbs, gutters, and devices that capture trash and pollution before they reach our waterways, beaches, and the Pacific Ocean. City crews clear garbage and debris regularly to keep storm drains flowing and test stormwater runoff to ensure it meets state and federal water quality standards.

### Q. How old are storm drains in Manhattan Beach?

A. Most of the storm drain infrastructure in Manhattan Beach is 50 or more years old and was installed as the City developed. Engineering reports<sup>1</sup> show that many storm drains are in need of repair or replacement as they deteriorate and fail. When storm drains fail they create sinkholes and cause flooding that damages streets, sidewalks, and public and private property. Outdated storm drains are not as effective in preventing trash, toxic chemicals, and pollutants from reaching the ocean, beaches, and waterways. The cost to proactively repair or replace aging storm drains is far less than the cost of reconstructing storm drains when they fail, potentially creating sinkholes and property damage.

### Q. How are storm drain maintenance and operations funded in Manhattan Beach?

A. Manhattan Beach receives funding from the City's annual Storm Drain Fee that is charged to all property owners. The Storm Drain Fee provides dedicated, locally controlled funding for the storm drain system of approximately \$350,000 annually, but has not been increased since it was created almost 30 years ago. The City also receives an allocation from LA County's Measure W Safe Clean Water Program of about \$410,000 annually. These funding sources only account for 10% to 20% of the annual cost of improving, maintaining, and operating storm drains in Manhattan Beach. Because of this shortfall in funding, the City's General Fund must subsidize storm drain improvements, maintenance, and operations, taking funding away from other services and programs.



Failing storm drains cause flooding in neighborhoods, sinkholes, and private property damage.

### Q. How does storm drain maintenance and operations impact the overall city budget?

A. The cost of repairing and maintaining local storm drains consistently exceeds funding available from the local Storm Drain Fee, requiring the City to use funds from the General Fund budget. This competes with funding for other general City services, such as, 9-1-1 emergency response, fire protection, police patrols, pothole repair and street maintenance, and parks and recreation.

### Q. What is the Manhattan Beach storm drain fee?

A. The Storm Drain Fee was adopted in 1996 and provides dedicated local funding to repair, maintain, and operate Manhattan Beach's storm drain system. Homeowners currently pay \$19.12 per year, which is collected on the property tax bill, and the fee generates approximately \$350,000 per year. However, the annual cost to maintain and operate, and improve the storm drain system is approximately \$2.2 million per year, including an estimated \$8.4 million in repair and replacement projects needed over the next six years.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.manhattanbeach.gov/home/showdocument?id=49145&t=637812241548054772>

### **Q. What is the Manhattan Beach Storm Drain Measure?**

**A.** The Manhattan Beach City Council has proposed the Manhattan Beach Storm Drain Measure to increase the existing Storm Drain Fee in order to enhance dedicated, locally controlled funding to repair, maintain, and operate local storm drains. This measure, if approved, would provide approximately \$2.1 million per year to be used for Manhattan Beach storm drains only and cannot be taken away by the State, the County, or diverted to other purposes.



City crew vacuuming trash from storm drain outfall at beach.

### **Q. How is the fee calculated?**

**A.** The current Storm Drain Fee is a flat rate that does not take into account the degree to which each property contributes to stormwater runoff. The proposed increased fee would charge 4.602¢ per impervious square foot of land on a property. Impervious square footage is land on a property that is built on or paved, cannot absorb rainwater, and creates runoff that requires storm drain services. Under this new fee structure, a commercial property with a large parking lot would pay more than a single family home with a smaller built and paved area. Under this new fee structure, the average homeowner will pay approximately \$129 per year. The exact amount that would be charged to your property is listed on your ballot. The storm drain fee would be subject to annual inflation adjustments upon City Council approval at a Public Hearing, that cannot exceed the increase in the Consumer Price Index.

### **Q. Do businesses pay the storm drain fee or just homeowners?**

**A.** Yes, both commercial and residential properties in Manhattan Beach would be subject to the Storm Drain Fee, including businesses. The fee varies by property and is based on the amount of square footage that is built or paved, cannot absorb rainwater, and creates runoff that requires storm drain services. Smaller properties like homes with yards that absorb rainwater will pay less than commercial properties with large paved areas like parking lots that contribute significant runoff.



Trash collected from storm drains.

### **Q. How would funding from the measure be used?**

**A.** Funds from the Manhattan Beach Storm Drain Measure must only be used for repairs, operations, maintenance, and improvements to the City of Manhattan Beach's aging storm drain system, including:

- † Reconstructing or replacing aging storm drains that are identified by engineers as at risk for collapse or failure
- † Installing and maintaining storm drain devices that protect local beaches, waterways, and the ocean from trash and pollution
- † Inspecting and testing stormwater quality regularly to ensure clean water standards
- † Removing pollutants, toxic chemicals, and infectious bacteria from runoff
- † Reducing illegal discharges of pollution in local waterways

### **Q. What happens without new funding?**

**A.** Without new dedicated funding for Manhattan Beach's storm drain system, pipes and drains will continue to age and potentially fail, which could cause sinkholes, flooding, and the potential for property damage. Reconstructing storm drains after they fail and cause property damage is more expensive than proactively repairing or replacing aging storm drains before they fail. Without a dedicated source of funding, maintaining local storm drains will continue to compete with funding for general city services, such as 9-1-1 emergency response, fire protection, police patrols, pothole repair, and parks and recreation.

### **Q. Are fiscal accountability protections required?**

**A.** Yes, the Manhattan Beach Storm Drain Fund is subject to independent annual audits.



# Important Voting Information

## Ballots Due by January 17, 2024

### Q. Who gets to vote on the Manhattan Beach Storm Drain Measure?

A. Since property owners would pay the proposed increased Storm Drain Fee, all property owners will have the chance to vote on it. Each parcel of property gets one vote and the measure must be approved by a majority of property owners.

### Q. How do I vote?

A. Your ballot is included in the same envelope with this information guide. Please complete your ballot, add your signature and the date, and send the ballot to Manhattan Beach City Hall in the postage-paid envelope provided. Ballots may also be delivered in-person to City Hall. The ballot must be signed by the Record Owner of the property or a representative legally authorized to submit.

### Q. When are ballots due?

A. To be counted, ballots must be received by **5:00 pm on January 17, 2024**, regardless of the postmark.

### Q. What if I need to replace my ballot or need assistance completing my ballot?

A. If you have lost your ballot, need a replacement ballot, or need assistance completing your ballot, please contact the Manhattan Beach City Clerk's Office at (310) 802-5056 or [cityclerk@manhattanbeach.gov](mailto:cityclerk@manhattanbeach.gov).

### Mark Your Ballot

<p>Mark your response, signature, date, address, and representative on this copy of Manhattan Beach's voting information system, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Renewing, updating or replacing voting system data; that is, an address change or ballot.</li> <li>2. Installing and maintaining voting system devices that protect local beaches, sidewalks, and the surrounding beach and public.</li> <li>3. Inspecting and testing voting system devices regularly to ensure they work properly.</li> <li>4. Removing pollutants, such as chemicals, and other hazardous materials from beaches, and</li> <li>5. Insuring (if applicable) against damage to local equipment.</li> </ul> <p>Mail this City of Manhattan Beach's proposed measure to the existing storm drain fee by agreement with the City of Manhattan Beach, subject to annual collection for the City of Manhattan Beach, water, utility, and other local services to the Manhattan Beach area (including...)</p> <p>Your response, signature, and date on this ballot must be a confirmation of the project is identified above as a representative and a legally authorized complete and valid ballot for the record owner's ballot.</p> <p>The undersigned hereby declares under penalty of perjury that they are the record owner of the above-stated property or a legally authorized representative of the record owner.</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Name _____</p> <p>Signature of record owner or representative _____</p> <p>Address _____</p>	

### Sign, Date, and Print Your Name