

City of Watertown
2025 Annual Stormwater Report
Supplemental MS4 Program Information
February 2026

To meet the requirements the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources WPDES
Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit Annual Report (Section 2.9)

Public Education and Outreach

The City of Watertown (City) participates in the Rock River Stormwater Group's "Protect Wisconsin Waterways" campaign and other stormwater programs (see RRSB annual report).

City staff helped to plan WI Stormwater Week and also co-presented a webinar on Illicit Discharges during this week. City staff co-presented at multiple professional conferences on the City's local water quality trading program to meet the MS4 Permit requirements of the Rock River Basin Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study. Additional stormwater information is shared via the City's website, in social media posts, and in person conversations with citizens, property owners, and other parties interested in stormwater issues.

Public Involvement and Participation

The City partnered with the Rock River Coalition to host a rain barrel workshop, a citizen stream monitoring training event (spring) and a streambank planting event (fall) in 2025.

The RRSB coordinated 10 stream clean-up sites with over 200 volunteers on September 20, 2025.

RRSB worked with WRA to provide a presentation to building inspectors in Fitchburg on 5/15/25.

The Rock River Stormwater Group contracts with the UW-Whitewater chapter of the American Marketing Association, who runs Creative Marketing Unlimited (CMU). <https://amawhitewater.org/aboutcmu/> CMU students learn about stormwater runoff issues and share that message with targeted audiences (usually the general public) via the Protect Wisconsin Waterways campaign, which includes developing messaging for social media posts, talking to event attendees at in-person tables and handing out promotional items, coordinating and attending stream clean-up events, and more.

Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE)

Outfall Screening

City staff screened 49 priority storm sewer outfalls for illicit discharges in 2025. Of the 49 outfalls, 14 outfalls had flow, and 13 were sampled and tested in the field for pollutants. No pollutants above acceptable action levels were detected in 2025.

One (1) outfall had flow, but was not sampled for pollutants, due to the presence of groundwater from sump pump discharges upstream. These outfalls had previously been tested for 5 years or more with no pollutants being detected above action limits. In 2022, WDNR approved visually screening these outfalls but not running tests on the water due to the long-term presence of groundwater (sump pump discharges) in the storm sewer system.

The City's total number of outfalls has been updated to 408 (previously reported as 553) following corrections and updates to the City's GIS system.

Spills

City Stormwater Utility staff were added to the DNR Spills Notification list on 9/30/2025.

Local spills that were called in to the DNR prior to staff knowledge included:

- 9/30/25 WI SPILL ID 20250930SC28-1 – JET FUEL
 - A small plane went off the runway and into a swale. No one was hurt. The fire department determined there was no fuel spill, so no clean-up actions were implemented. The City's airport has a mix of storm pipe, swales and then a small creek on the south end of the property. Most of the storm pipe is up near the fueling area, which is covered by a WDNR industrial stormwater permit. The rest of the airport, including the swales that run along the runways, the creek, etc., are covered by the MS4 Permit.

- 8/11/2025 WI SPILL ID 20250811SC28-1 – WASTEWATER SLUDGE (WASTEWATER)
 - A vehicle or vessel collision resulted in a discharge of wastewater sludge from an industrial facility. This facility is covered under a DNR industrial stormwater runoff permit FIN # 7832, FID # 128008870.

Construction Site Pollutant Control

The erosion control portion of the City’s Erosion Control & Storm Water Runoff Permit and Chapter 288, Municipal Code, applies to construction sites with 3,000 square feet or more of land disturbance. City staff completed a total of 138 erosion control inspections in 2025 (55 erosion control inspections specifically to meet the MS4 Permit; an additional 83 erosion control inspections were completed on city projects to meet NOI/City Erosion Control Permit/MS4 Permit requirements.)

Post-Construction Stormwater Management

City staff completed 62 stormwater BMP inspections during 2025.

The City partnered with Nathan Minor of Drainage Doctors on stormwater BMP inspections and maintenance tracking in MetaBMP. Thirty City-owned BMPs were entered into MetaBMP and inspected through that system as a pilot project. 122 culverts were also entered into MetaBMP to track inspections and maintenance of those structures, as part of the pilot project. City staff continue to work with N. Minor on system recommendations from a municipal perspective, desired reports, and more.

Chapter 288, municipal code was updated to address edits from the 2022 update, developments that drain directly to the Rock River (a river segment drainage more than 500 square miles), the minor road reconstruction definition, and to clarify the City’s citation authority.

Pollution Prevention

Internal (Staff) Training:

- Parks Department staff who clear snow and ice from parks and other municipal properties attended the WI Salt Wise training in November 2025.
- RRSB hosted two training dates on erosion control in September 2025 targeting public works employees.
- Six (6) Parks Department staff attended the WI Salt Wise training in Waukesha in November 2026.

- Public Works Commission presentation re: MS4 Permit Annual Report, SW Utility Rate Study presentation(s)
- Finance Committee, Committee of the Whole (Common Council) re: stream assessment grant (re: erosion, creek conditions and flooding)

Storm Sewer System Map

The City's stormwater system (catch basins, inlets, outfalls, manholes, etc.) was inventoried in the field in 2021-2022. This information was compiled in GIS format, and transferred into a new stormwater layer on the City's internal GIS site. Further confirmation of complicated and/or historic sites within the system have been addressed throughout the following field seasons. Jefferson County GIS is now managing the City's GIS, and adding features such as flow arrows, color-coded pipes for different size pipes, improved query features, and more.

Rock River TMDL

The City's water quality trading program, Watertown Waterways Improvement Program, is implemented by Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department. Multiple sites were considered in 2025, but ultimately an agreement with the property owner could not be reached. Inspections and the annual payment to the owner of the 1st approved water quality trading project were completed in 2025.

City crews installed a bioswale along Hiawatha Street in the ROW to manage stormwater that was previously running onto private property. Street reconstruction projects include catch basin retrofits with 36-inch deep sumps where stormwater does not flow to an existing stormwater BMP.

Private new and redevelopment projects resulted in a new biofilter and a retrofitted biofilter in 2025.

Additional urban stormwater BMPs will be considered and installed as appropriate to meet requirements and maximize stormwater treatment, most likely with future flood control practices.

City-owned BMPs 2022-2025										
BMP Number	BMP Name	Site Name	NC TSS (lbs)	NC TP (lbs)	Proposed TSS (lbs)	Proposed TP (lbs)	Percent TSS Reduction	Percent TP Reduction	TSS reduction (lbs)	TP reduction (lbs)
79	Permeable Pavers	Jones St Lot	64.12	0.1242	5.06	0.01009	92.11%	91.87%	59.06	0.1141
80	Biofilters	Jones St Lot	20.33	0.0336	9.17	0.01827	54.92%	45.69%	11.17	0.0154
81	Permeable Pavers	Cady St Lot	33.43	0.0553	3.61	0.00790	89.19%	85.71%	29.82	0.0474
88	Biofilter	Yard Waste Site	6609	26.4900	1515.00	17.85000	77.10%	32.60%	5,094.00	8.6400
92	South Biofilter	Reflection Park	5.79	0.0344	0.85	0.00531	85.41%	84.55%	4.95	0.0291
93	West Biofilter	Reflection Park	15.46	0.0992	2.69	0.01689	82.63%	82.97%	12.77	0.0823
94	Permeable Pavers	Senior Center	362.8	0.6000	242.90	0.40690	33.05%	32.18%	119.90	0.1931
95	Biofilter	Watertower Court	3299	5.6000	1354.00	2.90000	58.96%	48.21%	1,945.00	2.7000
96	Biofilter	Boomer St.-West	360.3		139.80		61.20%	46.60%	220.50	0.0000
97	Biofilter	Boomer St. - East	375.4		145.66		61.20%	46.60%	229.74	0.0000
102	Biofilter	Fire Station-North	1346	2.8890	269.10	0.57780	80.01%	80.00%	1,076.93	2.3112
103	Biofilter	Fire Station-Middle								
104	Biofilter	Fire Station-South								
106	Biofilter	Hiawatha St. ROW	664	1.8440	662.54	0.38245	85.49%	79.26%	567.65	1.4616
						0.00000			0.00	0.0000
Total			13155.63	37.7697	4350.36	4.26715			9,371.50	6.6659
WQT #1	Buffer								17,420.00	73.2500
Total with WQT Practice									26,791.50	79.9159

Figure 1: TSS & TP Reductions, City-Owned BMPs & WQT Practice, 2022-2025.