



## The Stormwater Utility in Action

*Stormwater Utility funds enable the City to replace manhole castings and lids along the SR 3 road resurfacing project.*

MOUNT VERNON - When State Route 3 was scheduled for resurfacing this year, the City of Mount Vernon decided to utilize some of the new stormwater funds to design for the future. Specifically, replacing the manhole lids and castings along the route was seen as a prudent measure to take in order to allow for ease of maintenance. The resurfacing work along State Route 3 has been going on over the past month.

"This is a great example of how ODOT, the contractors, and the City are working together," said Mount Vernon Mayor Matt Starr. "In the past, we've had problems with locating utilities because the manholes and valves were buried under the pavement, so bringing these access points to the surface will save time, money, and frustration when it comes to maintaining this key part of our infrastructure."

In 2019, the City of Mount Vernon started taking steps to create a Stormwater Utility fund by gaining Council Approval and determining an appropriate fee schedule which started with the first fee payment being billed in August of 2020. Since August of 2020 with the start of the fee the fund has grown substantially to allow for more projects to improve the stormwater system to be taken on. The Stormwater Utility fund paid for about 20 replacements which will improve utility line access for future upkeep and integrity.



*New manhole lids installed on SR 3.*

A Stormwater Utility is a program that provides for the maintenance and improvement of public systems of drainage throughout the City. Revenues collected are placed in a dedicated fund which can only be used for expenses related to the maintenance and improvement of public drainage systems. Many municipalities in Ohio and across the nation have implemented Stormwater Utilities as an alternative way to equitably pay for the costs of providing and maintaining a modern public drainage system. Over 100 communities in Ohio alone currently have an established Stormwater Utility. Drainage maintenance is required for public safety and economic viability and this stormwater utility will allow the City of Mount Vernon, Ohio to take a more systematic approach to flood reduction and drainage.



New Stormwater manhole on SR 3.

"Utility funds are being used to make key improvements to the stormwater system that will last for many years," Starr added. "More projects are also being planned along with the Stormwater Master Plan that will aid in prioritizing project funding."

As this utility helps to improve the entire system there is an expected ripple effect of benefits for all City utilities and operations as systems become up to date and more efficient. More information about the stormwater utility as well as other updates can be found at [mountvernonohio.org](http://mountvernonohio.org).

### END ###

#### **ABOUT THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON:**

The City of Mount Vernon is an innovative community with an authentic hometown feel. Home to 17,000 people, Mount Vernon is the county seat for Knox County and boasts historic buildings and districts as well as business and professional, educational, and recreational opportunities through many adaptive reuses of the community's infrastructure and spaces. Specific attractions are the historic Woodward Opera House, the Knox County Memorial Building and Theater, and the 250-acre Ariel~Foundation Park adjacent to the state scenic Kokosing River. With strong ties to higher education, Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Kenyon College, and Central Ohio Technical College have satellite locations in the historic downtown. Located 40 miles northeast of Columbus, Mount Vernon is near the geographic center of Ohio and has connections all over the globe.

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