

City of Goshen Stormwater toolbox

Public Works & Utilities Department of Stormwater

204 E. Jefferson Street

Goshen, Indiana 46528

574-534-2201

bit.ly/goshen-stormwater

Director of Public Works: Dustin Sailor Stormwater Coordinator: Jason Kauffman- 537-3832

A Tale of Two Floods

Over the past 15 months, the City of Goshen has experienced two floods. The first was the historic flood in February 2018 where the Elkhart River crested at 12.49 feet. The second flood occurred just a few weeks ago and the Elkhart River crested at 9.12 feet. Both floods impacted private and public properties and the clean-up and recovery from both continues to this day.

The current water level of the Elkhart River can be seen at the following National Weather Service website: <u>bit.ly/ElkhartRiverHydrograph</u>. If you

decide to check it out you can also see the 10 historic crests of the Elkhart River. The interesting thing is the top seven (7) occurred between the months of December and March. During these months the ground tends to be frozen and may be covered with snow, both of which can make flooding worse, as Goshen and other areas experienced in February 2018.

The Indiana Climate Change Impacts Assessment (IN CCIA) has been releasing reports since March 2018, on how climate change could impact Indiana. Scientists and decision makers from across the state are conducting the assessment so we can better understand what types of changes could occur if we do not reduce the release of heat-trapping gases (e.g. carbon dioxide and methane) to the atmosphere. Two key findings in the reports released by IN CCIA on rainfall are that the "average annual precipitation has increased 5.6 inches since 1895," and heavy downpours have "grown by 42% from 1958 to 2016." The data also shows that by mid-century (2050s) spring rainfall could increase by 16% statewide. This means the potential for flood events will increase and water quality will decrease due to stormwater pollution. For more information visit www.IndianaClimate.org.

What can we do about the potential for increased rains in the winter and spring? How can we prepare for the next flood? The answer is to slow stormwater down, allow it to spread out, and to soak into the soil. We can do this by increasing pervious areas in the city, by installing green infrastructure practices, by planting more trees (Goshen's 'Tree Canopy Goal of 45% by 2045), and by planting native grasses and flowers which have deeper roots (feet long) compared to those of turf grass (4-6 inches). Together we can work to make our community more resilient to the changes climate change will bring.



Report an Illicit Discharge—An illicit discharge is anything other than rain that could flow or be washed into a storm drain. If you see something that doesn't look right please call 574-534-2201, send an email to <u>jasonkauffman@goshencity.com</u>, or submit a Stormwater Report through the City of Goshen's new "Report an Issue" button in the upper corner of the City's website (<u>www.goshenindiana.org</u>).

