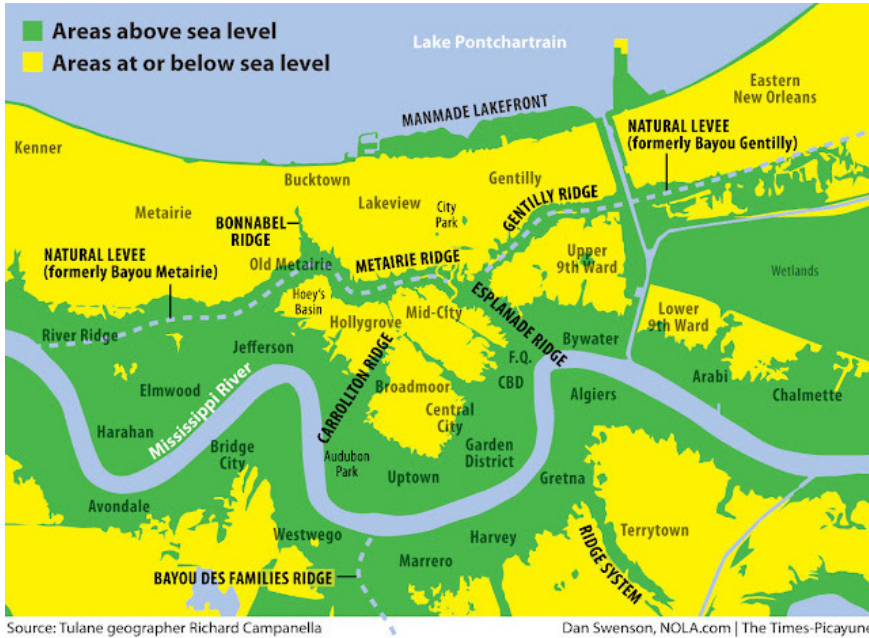


# Orleans Parish Stormwater Drainage Infrastructure



Orleans Parish Stormwater Drainage System is unique because it requires both pumping and gravity to keep our city mostly dry.



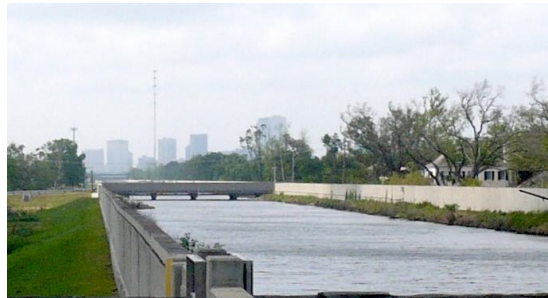
This is because many neighborhoods are below sea level and would be inhabitable without pumping out stormwater.

The Stormwater Drainage System is made up of:

- Catch Basins
- Underground Pipes
- Underground and Above Ground Canals
- Pumping Stations



Catch Basins



Canals



Pumping Stations

The Stormwater Drainage System is managed by two entities:

1. Sewerage and Water Board: Manages the 124 pumps, canals, and large pipes.
2. City of New Orleans Department of Public Works: Manages the 85,000 catch basins and small pipes connected to the catch basins.



Flooding has become more frequent in New Orleans due to limited maintenance of the stormwater drainage system and climate change, which is creating more intense rainstorms.

# How is the stormwater drainage system paid for?

- 1 We pay for the S&WB drainage infrastructure through 3 millages on our property tax. Nothing on your water bill goes towards stormwater drainage.

However, 60% of properties in Orleans Parish are left off of the tax roll and do not contribute to funding the S&WB's stormwater drainage system. These are tax-exempt properties such as nonprofits, churches, hospitals, academic institutions, government buildings, etc. Local tax bodies have to forego \$125 million in revenue due to these exemptions.



Back of Louis Armstrong Park with a lot of concrete, high amount of stormwater runoff and is tax-exempt from the drainage millages.

- 2 The Department of Public Works is funded through the City's Annual Budget, and at one time there was only \$150,000 allocated to maintaining the 85,000 Catch Basins

**In 2017, the S&WB stated that there is an annual funding gap of \$55 million needed to maintain the entire stormwater drainage system.**

## Addressing the Funding Gap: Politics at Play

State of Louisiana House Bill No. 713 Act No. 228

In 2022, the State of Louisiana passed a bill to authorize political subdivisions to create stormwater utility systems and adopt utility fees relative to stormwater management systems without a public vote.

What is a Stormwater Fee?

A stormwater fee is a payment determined by how much stormwater runs off of your property. Stormwater fees can look different, but money collected by this fee is generally used for maintenance of the grey infrastructure system or can be used to fund green infrastructure projects and maintenance.

**Water Wise Gulf South Collective Recommendations:**

The funding of the stormwater drainage system is inconsistent because 60% of properties are tax-exempt and do not pay for stormwater drainage infrastructure. Many of these tax-exempt properties are large and contribute a lot of stormwater runoff. Before any fees are imposed, more analysis should be done about how much stormwater runoff these properties contribute. Additionally, fees should not be imposed on those properties that are already contributing to the 3 millages. Finally, Act No 228 has dangerous consequences for the entire State, and any new fees to fund the stormwater drainage infrastructure system should require a public vote.