



MAINSTREAMING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

A program of New Jersey Future



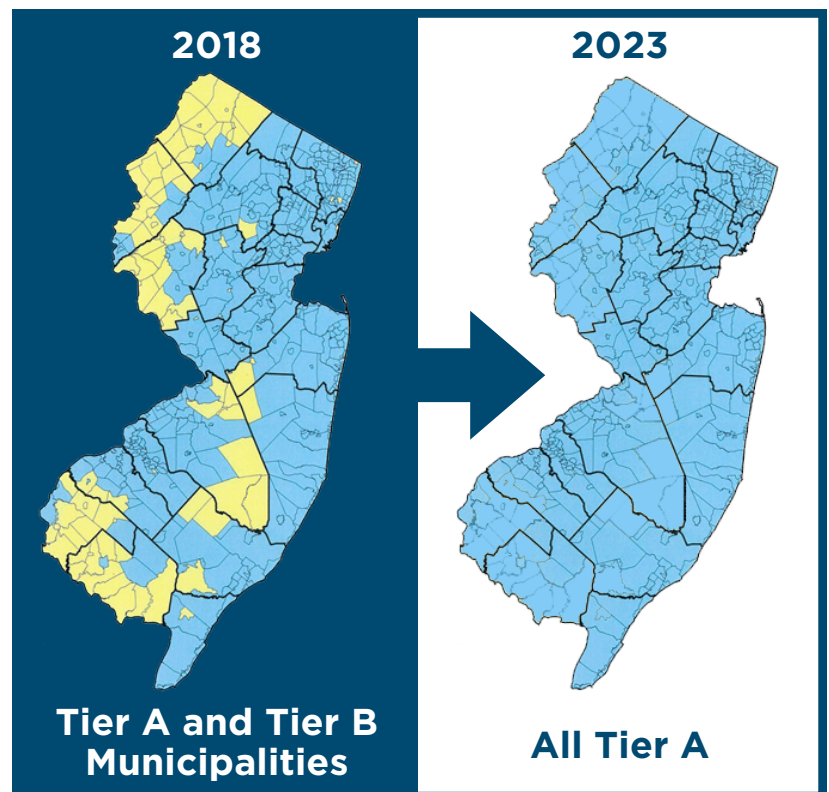
Municipal Stormwater Management 101: New MS4 Requirements

Upgrading and retrofitting New Jersey's stormwater infrastructure and reducing impervious cover is a key way to address nonpoint source pollution. Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs), including [green infrastructure](#), are an integral part of both improving the quality of New Jersey's lakes, rivers, streams, and bays, and reducing dangerous flooding events worsened by climate change.

What is an MS4 Permit?

The state issued permit requires municipalities with separated stormwater systems to address their impaired streams and the pollutants contributing to their degradation. Despite prior Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permits and their requirements for municipalities to address water quality impairments, an overwhelming number of municipalities have not achieved compliance, and many of New Jersey's waterways are still considered impaired.

The new [Tier A MS4 permit](#), effective January 1, 2023, reflects a shift toward watershed level planning to address water quality issues and flooding in order to better protect communities from the impacts of climate change.



Source: NJDEP, Bureau of Stormwater Permitting

What This New Permit Means for Municipalities.

All towns previously considered Tier B, over 100 municipalities, have been reclassified as Tier A. This reclassification means all of New Jersey's municipalities are subject to permitting obligations informed by [federal regulations](#), which include more stringent requirements set forth in the Clean Water Act.



Another Significant Change from 2018 is the Inclusion of a Watershed Improvement Plan (WIP) Requirement.

The WIP process and its eventual implementation will begin to address nonpoint source pollution throughout New Jersey. This process includes three phases for communities to map out actions to improve water quality by reducing pollutants and reducing or eliminating flooding in municipalities. The three steps to the WIP process over the five-year permit cycle include:

1. **Mapping:** Municipalities are required to map all publicly and privately owned stormwater infrastructure, impervious cover, and other relevant data by 2026.
2. **Planning:** Communities will outline potential water quality improvement projects, provide an estimate of funding necessary for these improvements, and provide other relevant water quality data by 2027.
3. **Final Plan and Implementation:** Municipalities will submit final project locations for water quality improvement projects by 2028.

WIP TIMELINE



Stormwater in Action



Stormwater picks up oil, trash and other contaminants. If it is left untreated, the stormwater conveys the contaminants into streams. Photo credit: Andrew Tabas. Location: Bordentown, NJ



Bioswale in a parking lot in Asbury Park, NJ. Image Credit: New Jersey Future



Pipes convey stormwater from impervious surfaces into the Delaware River. Photo credit: Andrew Tabas. Location: Trenton, NJ.

