

Rainwater fee details emerging in Portland

Please work through each of the following questions WITH YOUR TABLE GROUP, MAKING SURE THAT EACH MEMBER OF YOUR TABLE GROUP PARTICIPATES IN THE DISCUSSION PROCESS! In preparation for our test next week, each member of the group should record discussion notes and answers in their notebooks.

1. What change is the City of Portland making in its sewage fees, and why is it making these changes?
2. Why will Joker's Family Fun and Games be paying a much higher sewage fee in the future, while Barber Foods and Oakhurst Dairy will both be paying lower fees?
3. When Ian Housel says that Portland's current fee system is "inequitable", what does he mean? Be specific in your response.
4. Why did Portland's City Council decide that paying for CSO improvements through higher property taxes was "unfair"? Explain clearly.
5. Why does Portland Mayor Michael Brennan believe that Portland won't be receiving "Federal dollars" to help pay for the CSO improvements? Does this seem fair to you? Why or why not?
6. What are three specific steps that property owners can take to lower their stormwater fees? How is Portland "incentivizing" this process?
7. What happened in Lewiston when a stormwater fee was added in 2006? Were the citizens successful in their efforts? Do you feel that Lewiston residents were right to do what they did? Why or why not?
8. As a group, come up with a plan for introducing a stormwater fee in a town. What kinds of information needs to be shared with all town residents before the fee is charged? How do you intend to work with residents who oppose the fees?