Function of Sump Pumps & Downspouts

Rainwater can enter the basement through many sources. The job of a sump pump is to divert the water from inside your basement to a location outside of the house. A sump pump is usually installed in a sump pit which stores the water. When this water reaches a certain level, it triggers the sump pump which pumps the water back outside, away from the house. A downspout's purpose is to direct water from the roof gutters away from the house.

The Problem of Inflow

Inflow is caused by improperly connected foundation (footing) drains, sump pumps, and downspouts. Instead of directing the clear rain water outside and away from the house, it directs the water into the sanitary sewer system. Inflow is a problem because it creates an extra water burden for the sanitary sewer system, and when this system is overloaded, sewage can back up into our streets, buildings, and your home. It also means that our utility bills are higher because we are collectively paying for the unnecessary treatment of clean water!

Rules and Regulations

Inflow is a problem for all of Delaware County's communities and sanitary sewer systems. All municipalities have adopted ordinances which make it illegal to have improper connections to the sanitary sewer. Fees and other enforcement measures can be used to achieve compliance. To avoid fines make sure your sump pumps and downspouts discharge properly.

Homeowners have an impact on preventing or causing the problem of inflow. Your community and neighbors are relying on you to take responsibility for making sure that your connections are not contributing to the problem.

For more information regarding what is being done about inflow in your community, contact your local municipality or sewer authority.

DELAWARE COUNTY REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL AUTHORITY
100 EAST FIFTH STREET
CHESTER, PA 19013
WWW.DELCORA.ORG
610-876-5523

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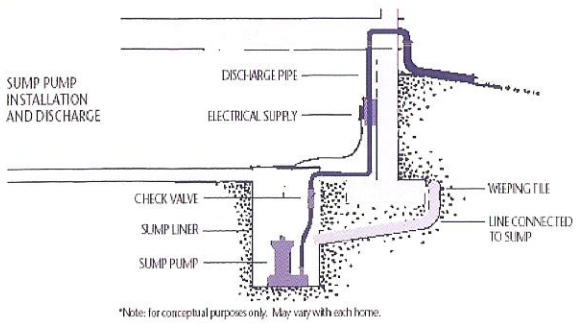
Disconnecting & Redirecting Your Sump Pump & Downspouts

In wet weather it only takes a few improperly connected sump pumps to cause a sanitary sewer backup into basements, streets and waterways.

How Do I Know If My Sump Pump Is Improperly Connected?

Your sump pump is improperly connected to the sanitary sewer if it is connected to the drain or sink in your basement. Unless you are sure your basement drain is not connected to the sanitary sewer, your sump pump is probably improperly connected.



Proper sump pump discharge connections are to the outside of the house only!

How Do I Know If My Downspout Is Improperly Connected?

If your downspouts disappear into the ground rather than discharging into your yard, they may be connected to the sanitary sewer. While connections to the *storm* sewer are permitted, connections to the *sanitary* sewer must be disconnected and redirected.

Downspouts that look like this could be connected to the sanitary sewer.

Disconnecting Your Sump Pump

If your sump pump discharges to the sanitary system in any way, the discharge must be re-directed out of the sanitary sewer system. The change could be as simple as directing the discharge outside the house through a hose. If you aren't familiar with the work, contact a plumbing professional, your local municipality, or your sewer authority for more information.

Each household or business that redirects their stormwater out of the sanitary sewer helps solve the problem of sewage backing up into basements, streets, and waterways.

Disconnecting Your Downspout

Disconnecting your downspout from the sanitary sewer is easy to do yourself.

1. Cut the downspout, leaving enough space to insert the elbow.

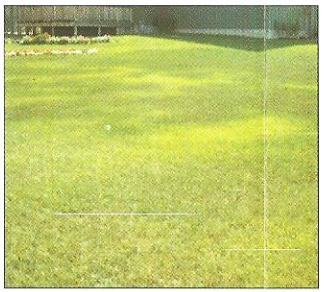
2. Tightly cap the end of the pipe sticking out of the ground that leads to the sanitary sewer.

3. Attach an elbow to the end of the downspout and use an appropriate extension to direct the water away from your home.

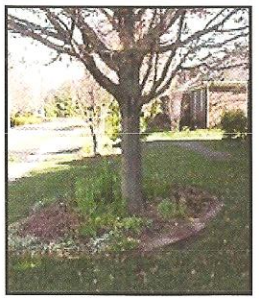
Where Should I Direct the Flow of My Disconnected Sump Pump and Downspout?

Water should be discharged away from your house or it may seep back into your basement. It should flow to an area where it can seep into the ground or be stored for later use. Direct flow to:

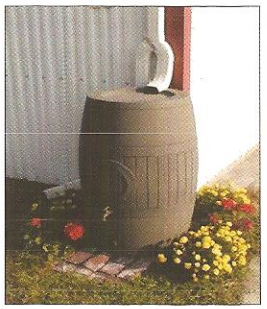
Raingarden



Lawn



Trees



Rain Barrel

Never direct stormwater into a sanitary sewer or onto a neighboring property!