

***Our sewer system is
at a turning point . . .***

Growth, now and in the future, is placing greater demands on the sanitary sewer system. In some areas, facilities may need to be expanded to accommodate the additional wastewater which will be produced. Any improvements needed will be addressed as part of the long term capital improvement program.

There are however, other demands being placed on the system which are not related to growth. These result from stormwater which is being diverted improperly to the sanitary sewer rather than a natural drainage area. These stormwater discharges often overload the system and - if not removed - could result in the need to expand facilities that would normally be adequate to handle all sanitary needs.

Your help is absolutely critical . . .

Your help is needed to avoid unnecessary improvements that will be required if extraneous flow cannot be removed from the sanitary sewer system. Many residents may not even know if they have an improper or unauthorized drainage connection to the sanitary sewer system. Here's where we need your help. Please review the information in this brochure, then check your home or business to see if you might have an improper connection. If you feel there is concern, please contact the St. Marys Wastewater Division (419-394-4114) so a city employee can meet with you to determine if a potential connection is causing problems.

***For more information or assistance
please call the City of St. Marys
Wastewater Division at
419-394-4114 - 8:00 am - 5:00 pm***

***Why storm - water
is such a problem . . .***

An 8-inch sewer line can service the sanitary needs of as many as 456 homes. Yet, during times of significant rainfall, that same 8-inch sewer line can be overloaded by only 36 homes from which rainwater drainage discharges through improper connections (either direct connections or through sump pump systems.)

***A critical concern
for all of us . . .***

Stormwater inflow and infiltration, particularly during periods of heavy rain, are causing two serious problems:

- One obvious problem, is sewer back-ups, which can occur when a sewer system is required to handle more than its designed flow. These back-ups not only cause serious problems for the affected homeowner, but could also negatively affect our property values on a community-wide basis. It severely restricts future residential and commercial development as experienced by other communities.
- Another costly problem is that our Wastewater Treatment Plant must treat water which wasn't sanitary in nature before it entered the system. The bottom line is that we, as a City, incur the cost of treatment, not to mention the potential environmental issues involved when flows exceed the capacity of the system due to excessive amounts of stormwater.

***What the City has
already done . . .***

- Visibly inspected over 400 manholes.
- Dye watered and smoke tested sanitary sewers for leakage and unauthorized connections.
- Video inspected sanitary sewer lines to detect obstructions and offsets.
- Trained City personnel in detecting unauthorized connections.
- Allocated money in 1994, 1995, and 1996 for infiltration and inflow studies, repairs, and equipment.

The City of St. Marys is committed to correcting this infiltration problem, but we will need your cooperation to bring about change as soon as possible. By doing a visible inspection of your residence and determining if you have an unauthorized connection, you can eliminate inflow to the sanitary sewer immediately.

***How the City
can help . . .***

Should you suspect that you have an improper connection to the sewer system, City crews are available to check the connection for you without cost. Should the connection be improper, the City can assist by suggesting alternatives to correct the problem.

What is an improper or unauthorized sewer connection?

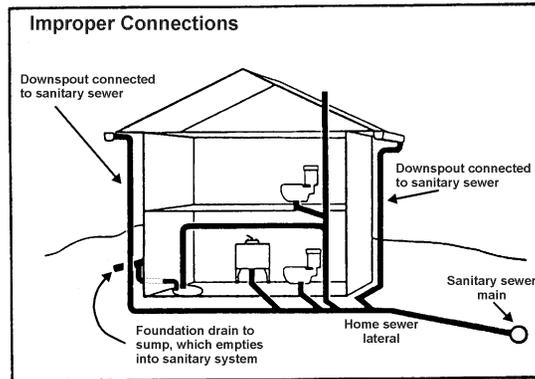
Simply stated, an unauthorized connection is any connection which allows rain or groundwater to enter the sanitary system. These sources of water should be routed to storm sewers, a drainage swale or other natural drainage areas. The most frequent improper connections include:

Sump Pumps - Sump pumps are necessary in many types of construction to collect ground water around the foundation and lift water to a higher elevation for drainage purposes. In some cases, drainage pipes from window wells, downspouts or driveways also empty to sump pumps. An unauthorized connection would route this water to the sanitary sewer rather than an existing storm drainage system.

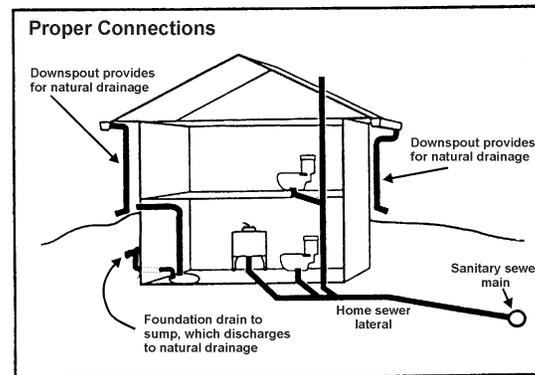
Footer/Foundation Drains - These consist of drainage tiles placed around the footer, foundation or under the slab to collect groundwater. An unauthorized connection would route the collected water to the sanitary sewer system.

Downspouts - Normally, downspouts channel water to a storm sewer or other natural drainage area, and away from your home's foundation. Occasionally, downspouts are improperly connected directly to the sanitary sewer.

For More Information or Assistance, Please Call Us At
419-394-4114



In this example, rainwater is channeled into the sanitary system, greatly overloading the system during periods of rain



Millions of dollars in otherwise unnecessary upgrades to the sanitary system can be avoided when rainwater is diverted away from the system, as shown above.

How do I spot a potential problem?

Since most people are unaware of an improper connection, they also do not know where to begin to check for a potential problem. If you cannot determine where stormwater discharges around your home, or if you notice any unusual piping configurations, you may want to have someone from the City provide a free check of your system

Your help now could save all of us millions!



CITY OF ST. MARYS WASTEWATER DIVISION

**Unauthorized Sewer
Connection
Awareness Program**