

May 2005

Re: Sewer Separation Project

Dear Property Owner/Resident:

As mentioned in an earlier letter, Lansing has begun a long-term project that will eliminate the City's combined sewers - single sewer pipes that convey both sanitary sewage and storm water. Your neighborhood is one of the next areas scheduled for combined sewer separation construction. We expect construction to begin in your area as early as April 2006.

The success of the Lansing Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) control program is based on separation of storm water and sanitary sewage flows into separate pipes. The storm water is discharged to local waterways, and sanitary sewage is treated at the Lansing Wastewater Treatment Plant before ultimate discharge of the clean water to the Grand River. If storm water remains connected to the sanitary sewer system, it can overwhelm the sanitary system during heavy rainfalls, which can result in basement flooding and overflow of raw untreated sewage to local waterways. The City is required by its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit to eliminate the discharge of sewage local waterways. If we fail to do so, we could face fines of up to \$25,000 per day.

Basement backups are usually caused by storm water or groundwater flowing into sanitary sewers. Therefore, it is imperative to ensure that storm water inflow sources and pumped groundwater on your property--downspouts, catch basins, driveway, or patio drains, cleanouts and footing drain water pumped by a sump pump--are disconnected from your sanitary sewer lines and are discharging either to storm sewers or to the ground surface. Stairwell and window well drains, which accept storm water from areas in excess of 100 square feet, must also be disconnected from your sanitary sewer lines and discharged to either storm sewers or the ground surface. Discharging storm or groundwater to the City's sanitary sewers is a violation of the City Code (Section 1040.10).

Per State of Michigan Public Act No. 4 of 1998, and the City of Lansing's Wastewater Treatment Plant discharge permit, eaves troughs and roof downspouts must be immediately disconnected from City of Lansing combined sewer systems. This action is required by the State of Michigan to help accomplish the following:

- Reduce combined sewage overflow volume to the Grand and Red Cedar Rivers during rainfall, prior to separation of the combined sewer area.
- Reduce wet weather basement flooding in combined sewer areas, prior to separation of the combined sewer area.

The City's CSO Engineering Consultant, Tetra Tech, will begin inspection of properties in your area by June of 2005. You may observe the City's Engineering Consultant, Tetra Tech, performing field investigations in your area. Tetra Tech personnel carry city identification cards. Identification may also be verified by contacting the City Public Service Department at (517) 483-4455.

All downspouts and eaves troughs must be directed onto the ground by June 1, 2005. Ground-level inflow sources, including driveway drains, pumped footing drains, catch basins, etc., can remain connected until construction in your street is completed. Separation of ground level inflow sources (driveway drains, patio drains etc.) on your property may require the expertise of a contractor, licensed to perform work in the City. A list of licensed contractors is available upon request by calling the City of Lansing's Private Inflow Line at (517) 394-5577. If our inspection identifies ground level inflow sources on your property, the City's Engineering Consultant will be contacting you to coordinate the separation work on your property with the City's project in the roadway.

Following is a summary of steps you should take:

1. Thoroughly inspect your property using the enclosed information sheets, to identify all connections of rain and groundwater inflow sources to your sanitary sewer piping.
2. Immediately disconnect eaves troughs and downspouts from your sanitary sewer piping.
3. Budget and plan for disconnection of ground-level inflow sources from your sanitary sewer piping, to be completed by April 2006.

Property owners are responsible for the disconnection of all inflow sources on their property. Detail sheets explaining how to correct rainwater inflow sources are attached to this letter. The "Typical Problems" sheet shows typical inflow sources that may exist on your property. The "Downspout Plug Detail Sheet" informs property owners how to properly disconnect downspouts from the sanitary sewer system.

Follow-up inspections of properties identified as having storm water inflow connections to the sanitary sewer will be performed as soon as the sewer construction in your street is completed. If inflow sources remain connected to your sanitary sewer service, the City will be forced to take further legal action to enforce compliance with City Ordinances. If connection to the public storm sewer is necessary, the property owner may be able to save considerable expense by coordinating the required work with the sewer separation project work in the City right-of-way. Storm sewer connections required after CSO construction has been completed in your street will be paid for entirely by the property owner.

Our goal is to work with you and help make sure you are in compliance with City sewer codes. If you are not sure whether you have any improper connections, or if you have a question about what to do on your property, please contact the City of Lansing's Private Inflow Line, at (517) 394-5577. The City's project consultant, Tetra Tech, will respond to your questions.

Sincerely,

David A. Berridge, P.E.
Director of Public Service

Enclosure