



Tuesday, June 20, 2023

## **Grant Program Reduces Residents' Sump-Pump Installation Costs**

*"I&I" program has saved City more than \$3 million at wastewater plant; reduced basement backups*

Boone residents are being reminded about the City's Property Protection Program to assist with the costs of installing a sump pump to prevent water backups.

"It's important for the public to understand the help that's available to them but also the requirements to receive the funding," Mayor John Slight said today. "At the top of the list is the requirement that a plumber approved by the City must do the work and fill out the funding application."

A sump pump is installed in a structure's basement, over a small pit beneath the floor. The pump will automatically turn on when water reaches a certain level in the pit and pump out the water to prevent it from flooding the basement.

The City will reimburse up to \$250 toward the costs of the sump pump as part of the long-running Infill and Infiltration Program to reduce the amount of water entering the sanitary sewer system. In addition, there is no permit fee unless the pump is connected directly into the storm sewer system. The cost of that permit is \$15.00. All permit fees are located on our website [www.boonegov.com](http://www.boonegov.com).

The program is well into the fifth year of an expected eight-year implementation. During this phase, inspectors are inspecting sump pumps in properties south of the Union Pacific Railroad line to Linwood Park from Division to Greene and Story Streets.

City Administrator Bill Skare noted that the "much-needed project continues to create some confusion" and recently released information may have raised new questions. He said the city staff will double its resolve to provide accurate details.

"We're in Phase 5 of the Infill and Infiltration Program or what we call the 'I&I,' but it's still easy to misinterpret its guidelines, requirements and objectives," Skare said. "In order for properties to be compliant, they cannot have water from sump pits or sump pumps going into the sanitary sewer. That water can go to a backyard, the curb or storm sewer, but it cannot go into the sanitary sewer. That's why is so important for an inspector to review the system and determine if the property is in compliance."

He continued, "The program locates cross connections like running traps and seeks to eliminate them from our city. Almost 40% of homes in some neighborhoods have sump pits. The problem with running traps is that they are direct connections to let groundwater into the sanitary system."

That groundwater and rainwater contribute to basement backups and excess flow into the sewer system. Such direct connections are prohibited by city ordinance. The I&I program has saved taxpayers more than \$3 million and reduced the number of basement backups during heavy rains.

Please contact Skare, 432-4211, ext. 1102, with any questions about the program.

Below is the city ordinance which governs water discharges. The highlighted section pertains to sump pumps:

96.07 PROHIBITED DISCHARGE STANDARDS.

1. General Prohibitions. No user shall introduce or cause to be introduced into the Public Owned Treatment Works (POTW) any pollutant or wastewater which causes pass-through or interference. These general prohibitions apply to all users of the POTW whether or not they are subject to categorical pretreatment standards or any other National, State or local pretreatment standards or requirements.

2. Specific Prohibitions. No user shall introduce or cause to be introduced into the POTW the following pollutants, substances or wastewater:

A. Pollutants which create a fire or explosive hazard in the POTW, including, but not limited to, waste streams with a closed-cup flash point of less than 140oF (60oC) using the test methods specified in 40 CFR 261.21. These wastes include but are not limited to gasoline, benzene, naphtha, fuel oil, etc.

B. Pollutants which will cause corrosive damage to the treatment works but, in no case, discharge with a pH lower than 5.0 standard units or wastes which would intermittently change the pH of the raw waste entering the treatment plant by more than 0.5 standard pH units or which would cause the pH of the raw waste entering the treatment plant to be less than 6.0 or greater than 9.0 standard units.

**(Ord. 2220 – Oct. 15 Supp.)**

C. Solid or viscous substances in amounts which will cause obstruction of the flow in the POTW resulting in interference but in no case solids greater than one-half inch (1/2") or one and twenty-seven hundredths centimeters (1.27 cm) in any dimension; such as but not limited to sand, mud, straw, shavings, metal, glass, rags, tar, plastics, woods, whole blood, paunch manure, hair and fleshings, entrails, paper, dishes, cups, etc.

D. Pollutants, including oxygen-demanding pollutants (BOD, etc.), released in a discharge at a flow rate and/or pollutant concentration which, either singly or by interaction with other pollutants, will cause interference with the POTW.

E. Any wastewater having a temperature greater than 140oF (60oC), or which will inhibit biological activity in the treatment plant resulting in interference, but in no case wastewater which causes the temperature at the introduction into the treatment plant to exceed 104oF (40oC).

F. Petroleum oil, non-biodegradable cutting oil, or products of mineral oil origin, in amounts that will cause interference or pass-through.

G. Pollutants which result in the presence of toxic gases, vapors, or fumes within the POTW in a quantity that may cause acute worker health and safety problems.

H. Trucked or hauled pollutants, except at discharge points designated by the Superintendent in accordance with Section 96.15 of this chapter.

I. Noxious or malodorous liquids, gases, solids, or other wastewater which, either singly or by interaction with other wastes, are sufficient to create a public nuisance or a hazard to life, or to prevent entry into the sewers for maintenance or repair.

J. Wastewater which produces objectionable color, odor or aesthetically objectionable conditions.

K. Wastewater containing any radioactive wastes or isotopes except in compliance with applicable State or Federal regulations.

L. Storm water, surface water, ground water, artesian well water; roof runoff, subsurface drainage, swimming pool drainage, deionized water, non-contact cooling water, and unpolluted wastewater, unless specifically authorized by the Superintendent. All sump pumps must discharge into a storm sewer, a sump pump collection system, or natural outlet, such as a grass yard area or creek, abutting the property. Sump pump outlets may be discharged into the street, however, it must not create a dangerous condition to the public, including but not limited to the formation of ice in the winter or algae in the summer. Any household that currently has a system that permits the switching of sump pump discharge into the sanitary sewer may not continue to do so. The City will not permit new connections to install any switching mechanism, which permits the switching of pump discharge into the sanitary sewer. If a homeowner discharges storm water into the sanitary sewer system that will constitute a civil infraction subject to the provisions below.

The City of Boone shall have authority to inspect residences and properties in the City to determine those which have storm water discharged into the sanitary sewer system. If a residence or property is so identified, the owner or occupant will be notified (regular first-class mail) by the City and required to remedy the unlawful discharge.

(1) For those property owners who opt not to repair the illegal connection from the sanitary sewer within 90 days, a \$50.00 per month fee shall be applied to the utility bill until the disconnection has been performed, but not to exceed 1 year. By the end of the 1-year period, the owner shall have completed the disconnection. If the owner has failed to repair the illegal connection after one year the monthly fee will increase to \$70.00 until repairs have been made. By the end of the second 1-year period, the owner shall have completed the disconnection. If the owner has failed to repair the illegal connection the City will seek to enforce this policy using all lawful means, including but not limited to the prosecution of a municipal infraction which could result in a civil penalty, court cost, and/or a court order requiring that repairs be made within a certain time period.

(2) Should the property owner deny access to the property for infiltration and inflow testing and/or inspection, the City of Boone will consider the property non-compliant with the City of Boone infiltration and inflow program. A letter notifying the owner of non-compliance will be sent (regular first-class mail) and the property owner will be given 30 days to respond with a scheduled inspection or a \$50.00 per month fee shall be applied to the utility bill until inspection or testing can confirm compliance. If the owner has failed to allow access after a 90-day period of time, the monthly fee will increase to \$70.00 until inspection or testing can confirm compliance.

(3) The above shall apply to all repairs other than sump pumps which shall require that upon written notification from the City (regular first-class mail) of sump pumps illegally hooked into a sanitary sewer, the property owner shall have a period of 30 days to remove all methods/systems of connection. Failure to disconnect the sump pump within 30 days shall subject the owner to the fees set forth in Paragraph 1 above beginning at the end of the 30 days.

*(Subsection 96.07(2)(L) – Ord. 2247 – Feb. 19 Supp.)*

M. Sludges, screenings, or other residues from the pretreatment of industrial wastes.

N. Medical wastes, except as specifically authorized by the Superintendent in a wastewater discharge permit.

O. Wastewater causing, alone or in conjunction with other sources, the treatment plant's effluent to fail a toxicity test.

P. Detergents, surface-active agents, or other substances which, either singly or by interaction with other pollutants, will cause interference with the POTW.

Q. Fats, oils, or greases of animal or vegetable origin in concentrations which will cause interference with the POTW.

R. Wastewater causing two (2) readings on an explosion hazard meter at the point of discharge into the POTW, or at any point in the POTW, of more than five percent (5%) or any single reading over ten percent (10%) of the lower explosive limit of the meter.

S. Any substance which, if disposed of otherwise, would be a hazardous waste as defined under 40 CFR Part 261. Pollutants, substances, or wastewater prohibited by this section shall not be processed or stored in such a manner that they could be discharged to the POTW.

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