



**South County**  
**SEWER & WATER AUTHORITY**

7510 East Q Avenue, Scotts, MI 49088  
Phone: 269-321-8925 Fax: 269-321-8943  
Email: scwa@ctsmail.net

October 25, 2018

Dear Property Owner:

Re: Clean Water Infiltration Elimination Program

In 2017 at the annual Association meetings of both Pickerel and Indian Lakes, we spoke about the Authority's problems with "clean water" infiltrating the public sewer system – due to flooding and high ground water tables. These problems still persist. As we discussed at the meetings, beginning in August 2016 the area experienced excessive amounts of rainfall, which subsequently increased our "wastewater" volumes by 65%. As a result, the Authority's treatment costs to the City of Kalamazoo have increased by an average of \$3000 (+/-) each month. (69% increase). As noted, with the continued rains and flooding, these problems and costs persist to the present day.

Where are the sources of Clean Water entering the sewer system? We realize there may be more than one source:

- The public side: Gravity sewer pipes under the road and sewer leads in the right-of-ways allowing clean water to infiltrate into the sewer.
- The private side (exterior): The property owner's pipe connection from the street to the house.
- The private side (interior): Residential basement sump pumps that are pumping groundwater directly into the sanitary sewer system. Groundwater sump pumps should not be hooked to the public sewer system (see enclosed informational flyer).

Obviously, improper connections must be corrected in order to eliminate "clean water" from entering the system to allow us to contain escalating costs. If the excess water cannot be eliminated, usage fees will continue to increase to cover the additional costs incurred by the Authority. As this increased expense is a matter of great importance, the Authority is following through on its "Clean Water Infiltration Elimination Program" which will begin with residential premise inspections with respect to groundwater sump pumps.

Per Local Ordinance and State Plumbing Code Section 1101.3, rain water and ground water are not permitted discharges into a public sewer system:

Ordinance Excerpts related to current issue

SECTION 8. OTHER CONDITIONS OF DISPOSAL.

- 17 -

D. Discharge of Unpolluted Drainage to System: Unlawful. No person shall discharge, or cause to be discharged, any storm water, surface water, ground water, roof run-off, subsurface drainage, uncontaminated cooling water, or unpolluted industrial process waters into any sanitary sewer of the system.

SECTION 11. INSPECTIONS

- 23 -

A. Inspection. Any house, building or structure receiving sanitary sewer service shall, at all reasonable hours, be subject to inspection by duly authorized personnel of the Authority.

B. Authority of Inspectors: Limitations. The Director and other duly authorized employees of the Municipality or Authority, bearing proper credentials and identification, shall be permitted to enter upon all properties for the purpose of inspection, observation, measurement, sampling and testing in accordance with the provisions of this Ordinance. The Director or his representatives shall have no authority to inquire into any processes including metallurgical, chemical, oil refining, ceramic, paper or other industries beyond that point having a direct bearing on the kind and source of discharge to the sewers and waterways or facilities for waste treatment.

C. Civil Infractions. A person, firm or corporation or other entity who violates, disobeys, omits, neglects or refuses to comply with any of the provisions of this Ordinance shall be responsible for municipal civil infraction and shall pay a fine according to the following schedule:

First Offense	\$75.00
Second Offense within first 12 months	\$150.00
Third Offense within one-year period	\$325.00
Fourth Offense within one-year period	\$500.00

If a determination of responsibility is made by the court, the court may impose costs as provided for by law in addition to the fines called for above.

The foregoing penalties shall not prohibit the Municipalities from seeking injunctive relief against a violator or such other appropriate relief as may be provided for by law.

Every day that a violation is permitted to exist shall constitute a separate offense. The imposition of any fines shall not exempt the offender from compliance with the provisions of this Ordinance.

The Authority believes the best method to locate ground water sump pumps is with an inside plumbing inspection of each home connected to the public sewer system. The Authority has reviewed this issue with legal / rate consultants and will implement the inspection program and cost recovery as follows:

- **Beginning Oct 1, 2019, each customer will receive an annual MISC CUSTOMER FEE of \$300 (Three Hundred Dollars), due and payable on Oct 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, UNLESS the customer contacts the office and schedules an appointment to have their home/premise inspected by an Authority representative (estimated 30 minute inspection). Upon confirmation by the inspector that no apparent ground water connections exist, the property homeowner will no longer be charged the annual MISC CUSTOMER FEE of \$300, pending the issuance of a "Compliance Discharge" certificate issued by the South County Sewer and Water Authority.**
- In other words, to avoid the annual \$300 fee, your home/premise (lower level/crawl space/basement) must be inspected by Authority personnel and a certificate issued stating your home is not contributing / discharging groundwater into the public sewer system.
- Failure to schedule an inspection by Oct 1, 2019 will result in the initiation of the annual Misc Customer fee to recover costs of the program.

The Authority Inspector will be available starting November 1, 2018. If you have any questions or would like to set up an appointment for your inspection, please call Cindy at 269-321-8925 between 9:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. weekdays, or send us an email at [scswa@ctsmail.net](mailto:scswa@ctsmail.net). The Authority inspector will be Kenny Schippers, retired Department of Public Works Director of Vicksburg.

Properties that fail inspection (are discharging groundwater to the sanitary sewer) will be granted 90 days to make repairs/alterations. Extensions for extenuating circumstances may be granted by the Authority Board.

We appreciate your understanding of this inspection process to enable us to control costs and ensure the long-term integrity of "your" sanitary sewer system.

Should you wish to speak with the Authority Board on this matter, the Authority Board meets monthly at Pavilion Township Hall and would welcome your feedback. The schedule of meetings is on our website at [southcountysewerandwater.com](http://southcountysewerandwater.com).

Thank you for your cooperation in advance.

Respectfully,



Cindy Chapman, Administrator  
South County Sewer and Water Authority  
7510 E. Q Ave., Scotts, MI 49097  
269-321-8925

Cc: Authority Board  
Rich Pierson, Director  
Rob Thall, Attorney  
Alan Smaka, WAI Engineer