

## Sump Pump

The City of New Hope Sump Pump Inspection program is designed to help homeowners identify cross-connected sump pumps so they can be properly connected to meet the City Ordinance requirements.

### **What is a cross connection?**

A cross connection happens when a sump pump is connected to a sanitary sewer line. Often, this can be a hose leading into a laundry tub or a floor drain. Sump pumps are supposed to drain into storm sewers, either through a direct connection (a pipe from the home connecting with the main storm sewer line), or by draining directly onto the ground through a pipe or hose outside the home.

### **Why are cross connections a problem?**

Sump water is what engineers refer to as clear water, most often rainwater, ground water, or snow melt. This water is clean enough to drain directly into area streams, ponds, and lakes without treatment. Wastewater, water from your sinks, showers, tubs, toilets, and washing machines, must be treated at your area wastewater treatment plant before it can be safely discharged into the environment.

### **Why should I care?**

When clear water is added to wastewater, it can overload the collection system. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has estimated that a single home with a cross connected sump pump can add up to 1,400 gallons of water to the system during one average rain storm. That's the equivalent of flushing your toilet 280 times (based on a standard toilet with a five-gallon tank, if you have a low flow toilet with a three-gallon tank, you'd have to flush 466 times.) Multiply that by the number of homes in your neighborhood, and the magnitude of the problem becomes evident.

Excess water in the treatment system costs the city, and you, money. Rates at the treatment plant are based on the number of gallons that flow through the system. When clear water enters the system through cross-connected sump pumps, everyone pays to treat water that is already clean. Clearing up the cross connection problem will help keep cost increases to a minimum.

### **Are cross connections the only cause of this?**

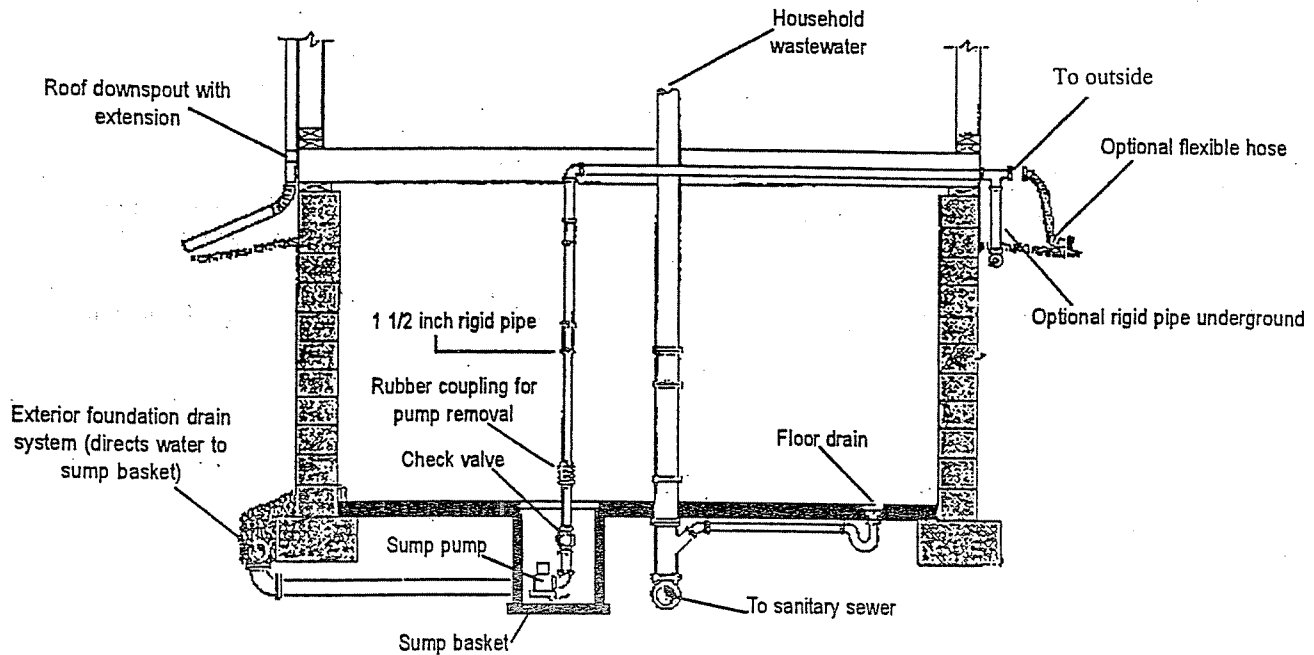
No, cross connections are one source of inflow to the sanitary sewer system. The other source is ground water that can also infiltrate the sewage collection system through bad joints, cracks, or breaks in the sanitary sewer pipe. The city regularly inspects the interior of the sanitary sewer pipe with TV cameras so problems can be found and corrected.

### **How do I know if I have a cross-connected sump pump?**

The illustrations below show one incorrect and one correct method of connection. The key to look for is where the water goes when the sump pump is pumping. If you have a pipe that goes outdoors, and drains into your yard (well away from your foundation), your sump pump is not cross-connected. If you have a hose that drains into your laundry tub or floor drain, your sump pump is cross-connected. If you can see right away that your sump pump is cross connected, it would be to your advantage to get it rerouted prior to inspection. This will save you time, as only one inspection will be required to confirm a correct connection, If you can't tell, don't

worry, the inspectors will let you know, and you will have time to get the problem corrected before the non-refundable fee is applied.

### PROPER CONNECTION



#### How do I make an appointment for an inspector to visit my home?

City staff and consultants have developed a plan to inspect every property in New Hope to ensure compliance with the ordinance. The city has been divided into sections and letters will be sent out to each individual property. Once a letter is received, it will explain the process. The property owner/renter would call the Public Works Department at 763-592-6777 to set up an inspection. Once it has been determined that the property does/does not comply with the ordinance, the property will either be documented as passed or failed. If passed, nothing more needs to be done, and if failed, the changes must be made within 30 days or a \$100 non-refundable fee will be charged to the utility bill until the problem is corrected.

#### Why inspect my house?

*Neither your home nor neighborhood* has been singled out for any reason. All New Hope homes and businesses with sanitary sewer connections will be inspected.

#### What will correcting a cross connection cost me?

If you do the work yourself, less than \$50, assuming your basement is unfinished and you already have a sump pump. If an outside contractor is used, most corrections will be around \$300, again assuming your sump pump is in place and it is just a matter of replacing flexible pipe and/or rerouting your flow.