

CLEAR WATER PROGRAM – QUESTION AND ANSWER

1. What is Clear Water?

Clear Water is ground water, rain or storm water, and condensate from air conditioners, boilers, and dehumidifiers that ends up in the sanitary sewer system.

2. What is the problem we are trying to solve?

The issue is too much clear water in the sewer system that the treatment plant needs to process. All of the municipalities that connect to the Allentown Treatment Plant are under an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mandate to eliminate sources of clear water from the sanitary sewer system. "The EPA Administrative Order requires the Township Authority to identify and describe the universe of storm sewer connections to the sewage collection system as well as provide a tabular summary of known connections indicating the location, type of connection, and alternatives for routing storm water after disconnection." In order to ensure compliance with the EPA mandate all properties connected to the sanitary sewer system in the Township will be inspected before the EPA deadline of December 31, 2014.

3. Why is clear water in the sanitary sewer system a problem?

The discharge of Clearwater into our sanitary sewer system can lead to the following:

- Sanitary sewer overflows into creeks and other waterways
- Basement backups
- Increased sewer system operational costs
- The necessity to construct expensive major capital improvements to carry the excess water.

4. What is a sanitary sewer system and what is a stormwater system?

- A sanitary sewer is a pipe located in the street or easement that is designed solely to transport wastewater from sanitary fixtures inside your house or place of business. Sanitary fixtures include toilets, sinks, bathtubs, showers, washing machines, and lavatories.
- A storm sewer is a pipe designed to carry rainwater away. Storm sewers are normally much larger than sanitary sewers because they are designed to carry much larger amounts of water. Drainage ditches and swales perform the same function in many neighborhoods.

5. What are clear water sources?

Rain water, ground water, or water created by air conditioning, condensating furnaces, and dehumidifier units. Water entering the home through these sources is typically routed to the sanitary sewer system in the following ways:

- Sump pumps
- Downspouts
- Floor drains
- Outside drains (stairwell, yard, and patio)

- Condensation
 - Air conditioning
 - Dehumidifiers
 - Condensating furnace or boilers

6. Why is it important for everyone to remove improper connections?

Removing improper connections will significantly reduce the flow of clear water to the sanitary sewer system. This will reduce the possibility of basement flooding due to overloaded sanitary sewers and reduce the amount of water that has to be treated, thus making the Township Authority more efficient and lessening the expenses to the home owner and Authority.

7. What options do I have to comply with the EPA mandate?

- **Option #1** is to conduct a self inspection with the attached inspection report. This will need to be completed and submitted with photographs documenting the requested areas. If an incomplete report is submitted, the property will then be placed on the Township inspection list. If you have any questions on how to answer the questions on the form, please call CodeMaster Inspections Services at 484-223-0763. In the process of the self-inspection if there are any items corrected please only submit the self-inspection report and photographs after all items have been corrected.
- **Option #2** is the Township inspects your property. If the self inspection report has not been received by October 1, 2013, you will automatically be placed on the Township inspection list. These inspections will be done by region and will begin on October 15, 2013 and continue until December 1, 2014. You will receive notification from the Township prior to the inspection regarding the date and time range. Township personnel will go “door-to-door” to inspect the properties. In the event that you are not home at the time of the inspection, a door hanger will be left instructing you to call CodeMaster Inspection Services at 484-223-0763 to schedule a mutually-agreeable time for the inspection.

8. How do I answer the questions on the self-inspection form?

- Instructions on how to fill out the form are detailed on the back side. If you have additional questions, please call CodeMaster Inspection Services at 484-223-0763.

9. When I perform the self-inspection and I find noncompliant items. Who can correct them?

Option #1 - If the owner or representative for the owner has the ability, they may make the corrections to eliminate clear water from entering the sanitary sewer system. These changes can be made assuming the correction(s) do not add to or modify the plumbing system. After the items are corrected, complete the self-inspection form and send in the self-inspection report with photographs to the address indicated on the self-inspection report.

Option #2 - If you are not able to make the corrections yourself you would then need to contact a plumber.

10. Do I need a permit to correct the items not in compliance?

A permit is required when adding to or modifying the plumbing and/or electrical systems. Removing sump pump discharge piping or condensate piping from the sanitary piping system and capping the inlet is not considered a modification to the plumbing system.

11. What is a floor drain?

A floor drain is a plumbing fixture that is installed in the floor of a structure, mainly designed to remove any standing water near it. They are usually round, but can also be square or rectangular. Most are 4 inches in diameter. They have gratings that are made of metal or plastic. The floor around the drain is also sloped to allow the water to flow to the drain.

12. Do I need to plug all floor drains?

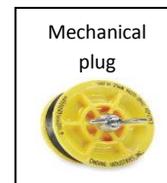
No. The only floor drains that are required to be plugged are the floor drains connected to the sanitary sewer system and

- are below grade level.
- are inside or outside.
- are used to remove any storm/rain water, condensate, or snow/ice melt.

13. What is the permitted method(s) for plugging the floor drain?

Any of the following methods are permitted for closing floor drains;

- Install a mechanical plug designed for the plumbing system.
- Install a water tight seal and concrete the floor drain closed.
- Have the floor drain and trap removed and cap the sewer line.

**14. Who do I call if I have questions?**

Feel free to contact CodeMaster Inspection Services at 484-223-0763 or info@codemaster.info with any questions you may have.

15. What else can you do to help the Township? You can assist with the following:

- Please make every effort to be home or have an adult home for the door to door inspections.
- Cooperate with township personnel as they perform duties required by the program including necessary inspections.
- If the Township is performing the inspection, be sure all drainage and access areas are cleared of personal items.
- Look for and read additional notices that you may receive.
- Periodically check the Township website for program updates.

We look forward to your continuing cooperation as we proceed with this program.

INSPECTION PROCEDURES:

16. What happens if you do not complete the Self-inspection form by October 1, 2013?

The property will automatically be placed on the Township inspection list. These inspections will be done by region and will begin on October 15, 2013 and continue until December 1, 2014. You will receive notification from the Township prior to the inspection regarding the date and time range. Township personnel will go “door-to-door” to inspect the properties. In the event that you are not home at the time of the inspection, a door hanger will be left instructing you to call CodeMaster Inspection Services at 484-223-0763 to schedule a mutually-agreeable time for the inspection.

17. What is the Township’s approach for the inspections?

Notices will be distributed by mail in the areas where inspections will be conducted after which Township personnel will go door-to-door to conduct the inspections. In those instances where property owners are not home, a door hanger will be hung with instructions on how to set up a convenient time at a later date.

18. What will happen during the inspection?

Township personnel will inspect the exterior of the house, any utility/mechanical rooms and the basement(s) to determine if sources of clear water inflow exist on the property.

19. How do I know when my home will be inspected?

The Township is analyzing data to prioritize the neighborhoods with the largest amount of system infiltration and inflow. You will receive a notice at least a week in advance of the Township staff coming on your street. An inspection schedule of neighborhoods will be posted on the Township website (southwhitehall.com). This schedule will be periodically updated.

20. If my inspection fails what are my next steps?

The inspector will note the items to be addressed and provide you with a copy of the report. You need to correct all items noted on the report. Once items are corrected contact CodeMaster to schedule a re-inspection.

21. Is there a fee for the inspections?

No, the Township is providing the inspection at no cost to the property owner.