

*A publication of the Avon Lake
Board of Municipal Utilities:*

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What Causes Basement Flooding?

As long as we want the extra space that a basement provides, we must be willing to accept the risk that below-ground-level areas are vulnerable to flooding. But the risk can be minimized by understanding what causes flooding and taking the necessary precautions to avoid it.

Basement flooding is caused either by sewer backup or home drainage system failure.

Sewer backups can occur due to blockage in the sanitary sewer or from excessive flows overloading the sewer. Blockage occurs when pumps clog with diapers, wipes or kitchen grease; and sewage backs into basements and toilets. Overloading can occur when stormwater flows to the sanitary sewer during periods of intense rain and/or snowmelt and either the pumps or pipes are incapable of conveying so much water. You can help prevent backups by only flushing bathroom tissue down the toilet and kitchen waste down the garbage disposal and by assuring stormwater sources from your property do not enter the sanitary sewer.

Home drainage system failure occurs when down spouts are blocked or improperly connected, the footer drain around your home is blocked or damaged, water drains towards the foundation, the sump pump stops

running, the sewer clean out pipe in your yard is uncapped, or more water is entering your system than can leave. Surface water will back into the pump well and/or seep through the basement floors and walls. Having a spare, battery-operated pump available and footer drain tiles tested and cleaned periodically, and good positive drainage away from the foundation will help keep your home drainage system working properly. Don't be tempted to use your sanitary sewer lateral clean out pipe as a yard drain. Not only is it illegal, it could easily cause basements to flood.

Disconnecting down spouts from the sanitary sewer line is one solution to basement flooding problems. If you cannot re-connect the spouts to a storm water line, extend them well away from the foundation and let the water splash into your lawn. We require downspout inspection on all new construction for your protection. Connecting downspouts to a sanitary sewer service line is prohibited by law; you can help by inviting one of our representatives to your home for an inspection. It will only take a few minutes to determine if there is a downspout problem.

A new basement inspection program is underway in areas that had combined sewers as well as in other suspect areas to

SEE FLOODING, PG. 2

SPECIAL STORM WATER EDITION

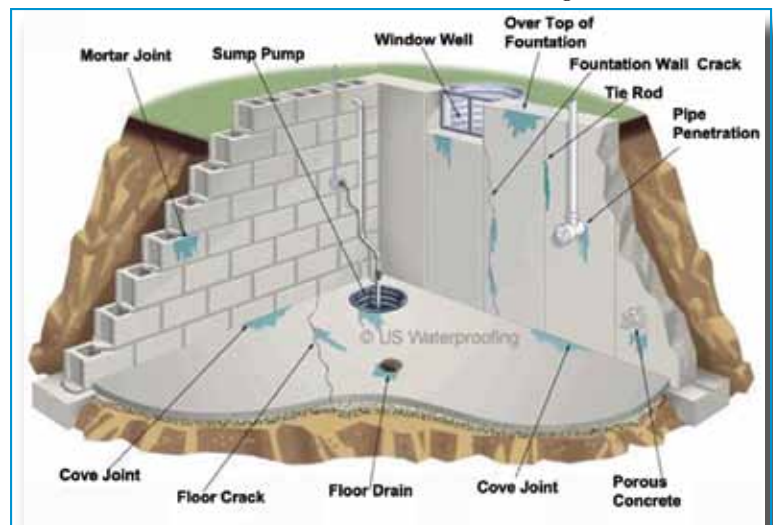
The fall issue of Waterline is devoted to the "causes" of basement flooding, what we are doing to mitigate it, and a special incentive program for homeowners that will reduce the risk of basement flooding. There also is a handy homeowner's reference guide for ways to keep storm water out of basements. Further information on basement flooding can be found at our website www.avonlakewater.org.

Avon Lake Residents Offered Foundation Drain Disconnection Program

Avon Lake Municipal Utilities has announced a pilot program to help residents adhere with the regulation that prohibits clean water from being discharged through a sump into the sanitary sewer.

ALMU is offering a \$300 sewer credit or a \$100 sewer credit and a drain pump to remove the clean water from the sanitary sewer discharge. Program participants will be required to sign an acknowledgement, indicating that they will permanently remove the storm water from the sanitary sewer and will complete the repairs within 90 days.

Residents are encouraged to call ALMU (440-933-6226) to see if they qualify for this program which ends December 31, 2011. Acknowledgement forms and program rules are available at www.avonlakewater.org



12 Ways Water Can Enter Your Basement - Call us if you are experiencing flooding. We can help identify the water source and suggest ways to stop it. Also see "Mitigating Basement Flooding" at our web site www.avonlakewater.org

What can we do to keep water out?

Preventing basement backups can most effectively be accomplished by working together. Here is what each party can do to minimize the reoccurrence of flooding.

What ALMU is doing

- Regular inspection/cleaning of sanitary sewers.
- Rehabilitating system (Center Road Lift Station-2009, Inwood/Dellwood/Bellaire-2011).
- Inspection program in areas where sewers have been separated.
- Foundation drain sump disconnection pilot program.

What the City is doing

- Regular revision of standards and ordinances to better manage storm water and reduce peaks.
- Installing storm water catch basins in high flood areas. Retention basin studies (determine if basins are sufficient size for 100 yr. storm).
- Regular outfall inspection program.

What residents can do

• Storm Water Sump Pumps

Properly maintain sumps and floats/ switches. Install backup, battery powered sump pumps. Assure sumps are sufficiently sized for potential flow. Disconnect footer tile/sumps from sanitary lateral. Assure ground slopes away from building.

• Sewer backups

Install stand pipes on floor drains. *Install check valve(s) on basement connections and/or lateral. Assure cleanouts are capped. Disconnect gravity drainage from basement.

**Requires on-going cleaning/maintenance, not specifically endorsed by ALMU or City.*

For more background information on "The Partnership" and what you can do to keep water out, see ALMU's "Rain/Snow Melt Event and Sewers Surcharge" presentation at our web site www.avonlakewater.org.

Dedication Honors Kniepper's 43 Years Service to The Community

City officials, board members, employees, family and friends gathered for the dedication of the John W. Kniepper Municipal Utilities Administration Building on Wednesday, August 31st.

John Kniepper's career with Avon Lake Municipal Utilities spanned 43 years of service, first as the Utilities Assistant Director in 1968, then as its Director in 1971, and finally as Chief Utilities Executive in 2003. John continues to serve as the Utilities Special Projects Advisor.

During his tenure, Avon Lake Municipal Utilities expanded from a water and wastewater treatment operation that primarily served the 12,000 residents of Avon Lake to a \$70,000,000 operation that sells water and sewer services to over 188,000 people living in a 600 square mile area of Lorain, Medina and Huron Counties. He is currently serving as ALMU's advisor to the Lorain County Rural Wastewater District, which is completing a \$27.7 million dollar sanitary sewer system to provide sewer service to rural Lorain County.

John attributed the Utilities' success to, "The support I received from the dedicated staff and Board of Municipal Utilities, and members of the Avon Lake City Council, who all helped move the utility forward."

Board Chair Chuck Whitmer MC'd the

\$1 Still Goes A Long Way!

Did you know that for only \$1 you can buy 250 gallons of drinking water and have the waste from its use treated? Two hundred fifty gallons is about what the average family of four uses per day for drinking, bathing, sanitation, and other uses. Here are some other things \$1 buys: one 20 ounce bottle of water, one small cup of coffee, or one day of basic cable service. We hope you agree that with water and wastewater, one buck still goes a long way.

ceremony and Chief Utilities Executive Todd Danielson did the unveiling. Municipal Utilities Board Members Dave Marquard and Tony Abram, along with Avon Lake Mayor Karl Zuber and Council President Greg Zilka, also attended.

BASEMENT FLOODING

FROM PG. 1

assure sump pumps are not discharging to the sanitary sewer. Sump pumps can quickly overwhelm a sewer during saturated conditions.

Please remember to check the sewer backup and drainage coverage in your homeowner's policy. Some policies have a standard \$10,000 liability limit, and insure listed items, excluding carpeting and computer equipment. Place valuable items, such as computers, well off the basement floor. Better to be safe than sorry.

Sometimes we can help solve your flooding problems over the phone; other times we need to come to your home and personally investigate. When you are having a problem call us at 440-933-6226 during workdays (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) and 440-933-3229 during weekends and holidays. For more information on basement flooding, visit our website at www.avonlakewater.org.



Kniepper quipped: "This is pretty impressive. I thought the letters would be a lot smaller. Doesn't a dedication usually happen after you're dead?"