

# Sump Pump

## Questions

**W**ater in the basement is always a concern when we receive a large amount of rain or snow. For many homeowners, the first line of defense is a sump with a pump in it.

The water that drains into the sump must be removed, and this accomplished with a sump pump.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **Why is the City of Pueblo inquiring which homeowners have sump pumps and where the water is pumped?**

The City is ensuring that all the sump pumps are plumbed to go to the ground or to the storm sewer.

#### **Where are sump pumps usually located?**

Sump pumps are usually located in the basement of a home. Sometimes the pumps can be located in the yard.

#### **Does the sump pump discharge have to go to the ground or storm sewer?**

Yes. Connecting sump pumps to the sanitary sewer is illegal, because it causes big problems. One of the problems is, the sanitary sewer pipe is not large enough to handle both sewage and the extra water from the sump pumps. The pipe will surcharge, eventually pushing back into someone's basement. The sewage may come out at a neighbor's or your basement toilet, or washing machine drain for example. The result is a disgusting mess!

Another problem is, the ground water in certain parts of Pueblo has a high concentration of selenium and sulfate. These constituents are naturally occurring. The ground water is in contact with shale that contains both selenium and sulfate. These two constituents cannot be discharged into the sewer. The Water Reclamation Facility is not able to remove the selenium and sulfate from the water without the addition of expensive treatment technologies. The City would like to keep from having to install extra treatment, so keeping the groundwater from being pumped into the sanitary sewer is one way the City of Pueblo is trying to keep treatment cost lower.

## **How to determine where the sump pump discharges?**

To test where the discharge from the sump pump flows, fill the sump with water until the pump is activated. While the pump is pumping, check the perimeter of the house to find the discharge point in the yard. When the discharge point cannot be determined, or it appears the sump pump discharges to the sanitary sewer, please call the Wastewater Department at 719.553.2896 to set-up an appointment with our staff for help to confirm where the discharge point is located.

## **What are the next steps if the sump pump is connected to the sanitary sewer?**

The City of Pueblo would require the sump pump to be disconnected from the sanitary sewer and be connected to discharge outside to the ground or to the storm sewer, if available.

## **Can the City of Pueblo make a homeowner relocate the discharge of the sump pump?**

Yes, the City of Pueblo can make a homeowner relocate the discharge. The Ordinance Chapter 7, Section 16-7-15 states that:

“It shall be unlawful to make new connections of roof downspouts, foundation drains or other sources of surface runoff or ground water to a building sewer or building drain which in turn is connected directly or indirectly to a public sanitary sewer”.

## **Does the City of Pueblo have the authority to enter homeowner’s property?**

Yes. The City does have the authority to enter a home if the home is connected to the sanitary sewer. The authority is found in Ordinance Chapter 3 Section 16-3-10.