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Tel: 608 323 3452

## Arcadia Wastewater Utility

# Are Your Sump Pumps & Downspouts Legal?

# Protecting Our Sanitary Sewer System:

**Disconnecting Clear Water Connections**

### What is Clear Water?

Clear Water is rain water, ground water or snow melt.

**What is a Clear Water Connections?**

Clear water connections to our sanitary sewers exist throughout our system. Many homeowners or business owners are not even aware they have clear water connections from their homes and businesses to the city’s sanitary sewer.

Examples of clear water connections:

1. Downspouts – Downspouts carry water from the top of the house or building to the ground and protect your roof from damage. An average house roof sheds about 650 to 1000 gallons of water for every inch of rainfall. Downspouts should spill the water out on the ground at least 3 feet away from the building.
2. Sump pumps – Sump pumps protect your basement from groundwater especially during storms. Sump pumps should discharge out of your house and into a yard or have a connection directly to the storm sewers. A sump pump can contribute approximately 5,000 gallons of water a day per home even more in rainfall.

## Arcadia Water & Wastewater Utility Department

401 Sobotta St.

Arcadia, WI 54622

rkdwater@triwest.net

Web site address

**Sanitary or Storm Sewer?**

In the City of Arcadia, we have two separate systems, one for sanitary sewer and one for storm sewer.

Sanitary sewers collect wastewater from toilets, sinks, bathtubs, showers etc from inside your home or business. These “sewer pipes” transport the wastewater to the city’s wastewater treatment plant where it is treated before it can be discharged to the Trempealeau River.

Catch basins or storm sewers collect our city’s clear water from streets, parking lots and discharges it directly to our nearby creeks and the Trempealeau River. No treatment needed!

### Why is Clear Water a Problem?

The discharge of clear water from sump pumps and downspouts, especially during periods of rain and heavy snowmelt, into our sanitary sewer system creates excessive flows that may exceed the design capacity of the entire sanitary sewer system. For example: a typical home contributes approximately 200 gallons of wastewater flow per day. **One** sump pump can pump up to 5000 gallons per day or 25 times the average wastewater flow per home. Add down spouts to that and we have some serious volumes of water flowing into our sewer system.

**What’s the Issue? It’s Only Water!**

If our sanitary sewer system reaches system capacity and it is ultimately overwhelmed, sewers will back-up into your homes. Sewer backups in homes are expensive and are often the responsibility of the homeowner. Most homeowner’s insurances do not cover sewer backups.

There could also be overflow from manholes causing raw sewage to be released into your neighborhood and environment.

Another reason to keep clear water out of our sanitary sewer system is that the clear water that reaches our wastewater treatment plant is treated unnecessarily. When clear water is discharged directly into our sanitary sewer system, we increase the cost of treatment due to greater volumes of sewage to process at our wastewater treatment plant. The cost of treatment is than passed onto you, the customer!

### What Can You Do?

Make sure your residence or business is in compliance with the City’s Ordinance 153.

It is a violation of the City’s Ordinance 153 to have clear water connections directly or indirectly connected to the City’s sanitary sewer. Persons could be subject to penalties and damage recovery if found liable due to clear water connections per the City’s Ordinance 153.

The first step to being compliant is to check your property for improper clear water connections. Next disconnect any clear water connections to the sanitary sewer that you find, (see proper installation diagram) making sure you have positive drainage away from your home.

If you have questions regarding clear water, improper connections and how to correct the connections, please contact the Arcadia Wastewater Utility at 608-323-3452.