PROPER SUMP PUMP DISCHARGE SAVES TAXPAYERS MONEY

Wastewater treatment plants are designed and built to handle a finite capacity. Unnecessary additions to this capacity can have financial ramifications costing millions of dollars, which are ultimately reflected in higher customer utility rates.

One way for the treatment plant capacity to be exceeded is through the often innocent direction of sump pump discharge into the wastewater collection system which leads to the treatment plant.

Sump pumps are common components of foundation drainage systems which are designed to capture surface and/or ground water that enters basements or crawl spaces below the slab/grade and direct it away from the foundation. A basic sump system may also include drain tile, a sump pit, a sump pump, a float or switch and a drain line. Gravity flow systems (such as roof drains and gutters) operate in a similar manner, without a pump.

Clear Water - Foundation drainage water, what engineers call "clear water", is rainwater, ground water, storm water or snowmelt. This untreated water flows directly into area streams, rivers, ponds and wetlands. Devices such as water quality ponds help filter out sediment and pollutants before the water reaches natural waterways. During the spring runoff in March through June, this foundation drainage water, if misdirected into the wastewater collection system, can increase the flow through the wastewater collection system by as much as twice the normal amount.

Wastewater - Water from sinks, showers, tubs, toilets and washing machines, called "wastewater," is designed to flow from the wastewater collection system, (also known as the sanitary sewer system) into the wastewater treatment plant prior to being discharged back into the environment. Wastewater from Fraser travels through the Town's wastewater collection system and goes to the Upper Fraser Valley Wastewater Treatment Facility (UFVWTF) located north of Town. This facility provides wastewater treatment for the Towns of Fraser, Winter Park (Grand County Water and Sanitation District #1) and Winter Park Ranch subdivisions (Winter Park Ranch Water and Sanitation District). The UFVWTF is permitted by the Colorado State Health Department to treat two million gallons of wastewater every day. Wastewater treatment is a crucial service for residential and commercial development, and an important defense in protecting public health.

Per Municipal Code, clear water from foundation drainage systems (either pumped or gravity flow) shall not be discharged into the wastewater collection system.***** Proper sump pump and gravity system discharge (as in photo, here) needs to drain to the Town's storm water system by being directed:

- onto the ground (but away from homes and other structures) and/or
- into the Town's storm water drainage system (surface drainage swales).

Why Proper Sump Pump Discharge is Important

- It is a waste of money to pay to treat clear water that doesn't need to be treated.
- Sump pump discharge into the wastewater collection system could cause overloads that could lead to wastewater backups in the system.
- Sewer rates are based on the Town's allocation of expenditures to operate the Upper Fraser Valley Wastewater Facility (UFVWF). Treating clear water is costly, which leads to higher rates.
- Treatment of sump pump discharge could ultimately cause the premature need for a wastewater treatment plant expansion which would cost millions of dollars. These costs would be reflected in increased customer utility rates.

Thanks for your cooperation in working to keep consumer costs low! If you have questions regarding sump pump discharge, contact the Public Works Department at 970-726-5491 ext. 205.

***Fraser Municipal Code section 13-4-40(10)** prohibits the discharge of any ground surface, roof drains or subsurface water from foundation drains or sumps into the Town sanitary sewer system.