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Why is there water in my basement?

Sewer back ups and basement flooding can happen for a number of reasons:

- Heavy rainfalls. The sewer system may be unable to handle the additional storm water, which means water and sewage can back up into your basement. The technical term for an overloaded sewer is a 'sewer surcharge,' or 'surcharging'.
- Sewer lateral blockages. The pipe between your home and the sewer main can become blocked with debris. The cause can be a collapsed pipe, the accumulation of grease, paper, kitchen waste or other foreign objects such as dental floss or feminine hygiene products. Sometimes tree roots are to blame.
- Main sewer blockages. Sewers can collapse or become blocked by waste and debris.
- Storm water. Water enters through the sump pump pit or seeps in through basement walls. During extreme rain events water may enter through basement windows or doors.

A quick check with nearby neighbors will help determine if the backup appears to be in your line, or widespread in your neighborhood. If it is widespread, call the Department of Utilities at 350-3431 ext 0

What can I do to help protect my basement from flooding?

The following measures have been found to help reduce the chance of your basement flooding.

- Install a plumber's test plug (available at hardware stores) in the basement floor drains.
- Install a riser at the basement floor drains. (a plastic drain pipe extending vertically from the drain)
- Modify the plumbing line so that water is pumped to an upper level drain, eliminating the drains at the lower level
- Install protective plumbing devices (like backwater valves). Inspect them regularly to ensure they are operating properly. The installation of these protective devices should be left to plumbing professionals. Check with the local building department.
- Ensure service connection pipes between the municipal sewer main and your house are in good condition.
- Have downspouts from your gutters direct water at least 5 feet away from the foundation of your home. Downspouts should not be imbedded into the ground or connected to the sewer system or footing drains.
- Ensure your footing drains direct water to the storm sewer or sump pump, away from your foundation. Footing drains should not be connected to the sanitary sewer system.
- Ensure your sump pump is connected to the storm sewer system (not your interior plumbing) or that it empties onto your lawn at least 5 feet from the foundation wall (not the laundry tub or footing drains).
- Slope ground away from your foundation to allow rainwater to flow away from your home.

What can residents do to help?

Every little bit of help from individual property owners goes a long way to an overall improvement for everyone.

Residents are urged to do their part by having an inspection of their inside plumbing to see if there are any improper connections to the sanitary sewer system. Down spouts that are piped underground should be disconnected. They may be connected to the sanitary sewer. Your storm sump should discharge through a pipe in your foundation wall to the outside of your home. Area and patio drains should outlet to a ditch or storm sewer. If in doubt, contact the Utilities Department at 440-350-2652 and we would be happy to schedule an inspection and run a dye test to determine where your drain discharges. Should you find an improper connection, a licensed plumber should be contacted to correct the situation.

Finding and removing storm water connections from the sanitary sewer will take time. We are hoping that this information will help Village residents realize that reducing basement back-ups will be a collective effort between The Village, The County and the residents.