

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 8, 2004
TO: HOMEOWNERS, CONTRACTORS, DEVELOPERS, and DESIGN PROFESSIONALS
FROM: ART DAHLBERG, DIRECTOR, CODE ENFORCEMENT BUREAU
RICH BAIER, DIRECTOR, TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
SUBJECT: NEW PROCEDURES FOR SUMP-PUMP INSTALLATIONS

Due to many recent instances of hazardous conditions developing as a result of sump pumps terminating in the public gutter or street, this practice will no longer be permitted. The discharge of sump water in this manner creates a public nuisance of constantly wet gutters and the accumulation of leaves and trash which exacerbates "ponding." In the winter time, a slip hazard may be created when the water freezes. As such, the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES) and the Code Enforcement Bureau (CE) have prepared this joint informational memorandum to appropriately deal with this subject and comply with both the City Code and the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

Effectively immediately, one of the following methods must be employed to handle sump pump discharge:

1. for one-and-two family homes, the discharge must be taken directly to a storm sewer provided that the storm sewer is within 100 feet of the premises;
2. for other buildings, the discharge must be taken directly to a storm sewer provided that the storm sewer is within 500 feet of the premises;
3. in the event there is no storm sewer available within the prescribed distances: the discharge may be taken directly to a storm sewer at a greater distance;
4. the water may be discharged onto the property away from the foundation and directly to daylight provided that it not constitute a public nuisance to adjoining property owners or the adjacent right of way. If later the discharge is determined to be a public nuisance, it must be disconnected or another solution found;
5. the water may be discharged into a drywell on the property. If this method is chosen, a geotechnical engineer should be consulted.

If none of the above are available, the sump pump **MAY** be permitted to discharge through the curb into the gutter, upon receipt of a letter from a licensed professional engineer stating that such a discharge would not result in standing water or otherwise constitute a public nuisance. This letter must be presented to and approved by T&ES. If later it is determined that the discharge poses a public nuisance, it must be disconnected or another solution found.

When applying for a building permit to install or relocate a sump pump, the application will be routed to T&ES for approval of the method used to address the discharge. The method of discharge must be shown on a plot plan. Five copies of the plot plan must be submitted along with the permit application showing the installation location of the pump; the location of a permanent, dedicated electrical outlet for the pump; and the location and manner of discharge. Before the proposed work will be approved, all exterior work (eg: the discharge pipe through the foundation wall and/or the location of drywells or catch basins) must be dimensioned to indicate the distance from the foundation and the distance to the lot lines. For properties in either the Parker-Gray or Old and Historic districts, the exterior work must

be approved by the appropriate Architectural Review Board (BAR). If an electrical outlet must be installed to serve the pump, an electrical permit is required.

If any work is to take place within the City right-of-way, an excavation permit must be issued by T&ES for all work within the right-of-way prior to the issuance of the sump pump permit. Application for an excavation permit requires the following:

- proof of notification to surrounding residents/business 24 hours before any work is to begin;
- provide a certificate of insurance for general liability. The coverage must be a minimum of \$100,000 per person and \$300,000 per accident. **The City of Alexandria must be named on the certificate as additional insured or co-insured;**
- provide a **Performance and Payment Bond*** that is not less than \$1,000. If the permittee will have more than one permit per year, this bond may be a continuing bond of not less than \$5,000;
- provide a **Maintenance Bond*** that is not less than \$1,000. If the permittee will have more than one permit per year, this bond may be a continuing bond of not less than \$5,000;

* Note: If the permittee obtains a permit for working only at one location, a combined bond for Performance and Payment and Maintenance may be used.

For more information on excavation permits requirements and fees, please contact T&ES on 703 838-4324.

Once the approval of T&ES, and when appropriate BAR, has been obtained, CE will issue the construction permit to install the sump pump and, when needed, an electrical permit for the service connection. Contractors must be properly licensed by the Virginia State Board for Contractors to perform the work for which the permit is issued. **It is illegal for a property owner to obtain a permit in his/her name, and then allow the work to be performed by an unlicensed person or by a contractor that is not properly licensed.** For example, the electrical work may not be performed by the building contractor unless an "ELE" designation is listed on the State issued contractor's license. **Only Virginia licensed contractors may work in Virginia.** In addition to the State license, the contractor must have a City of Alexandria Business License or show proof of reciprocity.

Inspections are required in accordance with the City Code and USBC as follows:

1. groundwork - before concealment (CE);
2. excavation permit, if applicable (T&ES);
3. electrical work (if applicable) - before concealment and upon completion of the work (CE);
4. final inspection (CE). At time of the final inspection, the sump pump must be installed and fully functional. The excavation and discharge method must be completed and approved by the appropriate agency. The final inspection will not be approved if extension cords are in use as the power supply for the sump pump.

Work performed prior to permit issuance will result in a Stop-Work-Order being issued. Work performed by unlicensed contractors will result in a Stop-Work-Order being issued and the permit being voided. It is recommended that property owners call the Code Enforcement Bureau on 703 838-4360 to verify contractor license information before signing a contract. It is advisable to identify in the contract who is responsible for obtaining required permits and inspections. **For the protection of the property owner, it is strongly recommended that the final payment for the work be contingent upon receiving an approved final inspection by the City.**

If you have any questions about the requirements for sump pump installations, please contact the Code Enforcement Bureau on 703 838-4360, or the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services on 703 838-4324.

cc: Gary A. Mesaris, Fire Chief
All Code Enforcement Staff
Emily Baker, T&ES, City Engineer
Lucky Stokes, Construction Div. Chief, T&ES