



Clearwater Inspection Program

Fact: Everyday, City of Omro rate payers pay to treat, on average, **550,000 gallons** of wastewater/clear water at the Wastewater Treatment Plant; of which **350,000 gallons**, on average, is illegally discharged or leached into the sewer system thru defective pipes.

In an effort to improve the environment and protect Lake Winnebago, the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has directed the City of Omro, and neighboring communities, to eliminate clear water entries (storm or rain) to its sanitary sewer collection system. Our goal is to provide adequate treatment facilities to properly treat all wastes and water tributary to the system. Primary emphasis has been to rehabilitate the existing sanitary sewer system by correcting the deficiencies which allow clear water entry during wet weather periods. "Clear water entries" is best described by defining the two categories causing the problems: infiltration and inflow.

1. **Infiltration** refers to the accidental entry of clear water, mainly storm (rain) water, into the sanitary sewer system through defective sewer pipes, pipe joints and manholes. Defects are the result of structural failure, deterioration and aging.

2. **Inflow** refers to the direct connection of downspouts, roof drains, foundation drains and **sump pumps** to the sanitary sewer system. The City has completed sanitary sewer rehabilitation projects to correct infiltration issues within the system's mains and manholes, however, flow data compiled during wet weather periods shows sufficient evidence that inflow sources existing on private properties are contributing unacceptable amounts of clear water into the system. In minutes, these inflow sources create an overloading of sanitary sewer mains and an impact of thousands of gallons of clear water on the treatment plant, which affects all rate payers in the City.

These problematic inflow connections need to be located and disconnected at the source, as they are illegal by City ordinance and State Plumbing Code. To comply with the orders issued by the Department of Natural Resources, the City of Omro has deemed it necessary to conduct inspections of residential, commercial and industrial properties to identify possible sources of clear water entry. All properties within the city limits will be inspected during this program. Estimated inspection time is 5-15 minutes. The following items may be checked to determine possible contribution of clear water into the system: **1.** Location and discharge of roof drains, gutters and downspouts, **2.** Discharge of sump pump, **3.** Connection of foundation footing drains, **4.** Yard area drains connected to sanitary sewer.

The city will be split into 6-8 areas and Omro personnel will go house to house attempting to gain entry. **Your property is located in the current inspection area.** A responsible individual must be present. If no entry is gained, a door hanger will be left with contact information to schedule an inspection date. Weekend inspection dates are available. To expedite this process, or if you have any questions upon receiving this notice, you may call Omro Utility at (920) 685-7025 M-F 7:00am- 3:30pm.

The City urges residents to take voluntary measures to eliminate any clear water connections which discharge into the City's sanitary sewer system from their property. Residents who are aware of, or have a suspicion of, any such connections may call the Utility Department 920-685-7025 for advice on confirmation or correction of the connection. **Voluntary action by residents will result in earlier correction of problems and, most of all, will reduce the wet weather load on our sewer system and treatment plant.**

Community understanding of the seriousness of this problem is especially important for this program to be effective. This inspection will require cooperation between the City and property owner. When an illegal connection(s) is located and verified, the inspection party will advise the resident/owner of the most economical method which could be used to eliminate the clear water connection. All repairs **must** be completed by a licensed plumber. If voluntary action of the property owner cannot be obtained, enforcement actions will be taken.

The ultimate goal of these efforts is to obtain a savings to the rate payers by reducing the treatment of clear water at the sewage treatment facility. This will be a major step toward the control of pollution to the waters of Lake Winnebago, sewer rate stabilization, and the elimination of basement back-up problems during periods of heavy rainfall.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Mark Van Pelt - Public Works Director