

September 26, 2012

News Release

For Immediate Release

Sewer Repair Program Identifies 100 Homes Needing Fix

Public Meeting to Learn More: 5:30 – 7 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 27, 2012

Northview Center at Doling Park, 301 S. Talmage

The City of Springfield has evaluated the plumbing of approximately 500 homes to determine whether repairs are needed to the sanitary sewer system. Of the 620 properties evaluated, 100 have improper connections to the sanitary sewer system that will be repaired by local plumbers at no charge to the property owner. The City will eventually evaluate 1,000 more properties as part of the Private Sewer Repair Pilot Program looking for downspouts, area drains, and sump pumps improperly connected to the sanitary sewers.

Downspouts, area drains and sump pumps should not be connected to the sanitary sewer system. The sanitary sewer pipes are for wastewater only from sources such as toilets, sinks, dishwashers and washing machines, not rainwater or groundwater. Springfield's sewer pipes are not designed to carry rainwater and groundwater. "By keeping rainwater out of the sanitary sewer system, expensive capital improvements can be avoided and manhole overflows and building backups can be avoided," said Steve Meyer, Director of Environmental Services.

A public meeting will be held to explain the program to those in the pilot areas on **Thursday, September 27, 2012 from 5:30 to 7 p.m.** at the Northview Center in Doling Park, 301 E. Talmage. Citizens can come and go between 5:30 and 7 p.m. A [map of the pilot areas](#) is online. Residents can look up their address on the City's website at: www.springfieldmo.gov/cleanwater.

"Property owners in the pilot area can help the City plan for the future by participating in this program," said Kevin Swearingin, Springfield Collection System Supervisor. If enough rainwater is removed from the sanitary sewer system, then the program could be expanded to other parts of the City. John Forrester, Project Manager for Olsson Associates located in Springfield said, "We are glad to be part of this pilot program because other communities across the country have found that about half of the rainwater in the sanitary sewer system comes from connections to the sanitary sewers on private property."

The Private Sewer Repair Pilot Program is part of the City's \$50 million planned investment over the next several years to fix leaky sewer pipes and to make improvements to the overall sewer system. This \$50 million Early Action Program is in addition to regular operations, maintenance and routine capital projects. The City is currently developing a long-term Sanitary Sewer Overflow Control Plan. This \$50 million Early Action Program is the beginning of a larger Overflow Control Program. This investment by ratepayers is not funded by taxes. It is funded by the rates paid for sewer service on utility bills.

“Ratepayers are making a major investment in our aging infrastructure to reduce sanitary sewer overflows and protect water quality,” said Steve Meyer. “And we will partner with our ratepayers to help address these problems on their property so we can provide reliable service at a reasonable cost. This investment will result in lowered, long-term capital expenditures.”

For more information, please contact Steve Meyer, Department of Environmental Services, (417) 864-2047.