



Council Communication

Office of the City Manager

Date	October 13, 2008
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Agenda Item No.	52
Roll Call No.	<u>08-</u>
Communication No.	<u>08-618</u>
Submitted by:	William G. Stowe, Assistant City Manager/Public Works/Engineering

AGENDA HEADING:

Approving Amendments to the Municipal Code regarding the establishment of a Personal Property Protection Program and a subsidy for qualifying plumbing work.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval of amendments to Chapter 118 of the Municipal Code regarding Charges for Wastewater Collection and Treatment Services. These amendments of the Municipal Code establish a Personal Property Protection Program and a subsidy for customers of the Wastewater Collection System of the City of Des Moines.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: The City will subsidize property owners one time only in an amount up to \$1,000 maximum per property through the Personal Property Protection Program. An estimated 350 customers are anticipated to participate in this program per year. This estimate includes funding for the fiscal year of 2008-09 retroactive to qualifying work performed after June 1, 2008.

Funding Source: 2008-09 Operating Budget, Page 294, Sanitary Sewer Operations Fund EN101-Sanitary Sewer Debt, Capital, and ROI, PWK074013.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The spring of 2008 was very wet with frequent and heavy rainfall that caused elevated flow conditions in the wastewater collection system of the City of Des Moines. These elevated flow conditions caused basement backups in some lower lying areas and can be attributed to, at least in part, excessive infiltration and inflow into portions of the wastewater collection system. A significant amount of this excess flow is entering the sewer system through portions of the private plumbing system within homes and businesses. The major sources of the excess flow include roof and area drains that catch rainwater and direct the flow to the private sewer service, and footing or foundation drains that intercept ground water from around the outside of the buildings and directs the flow to the private service lines.

Many of these connections were allowed at the time of the original building construction and are “grandfathered” under the current plumbing codes. The goals of this program are to provide an incentive for the property owners to remove the sources of infiltration and inflow from the private sewer system and to assist in the cost of protecting the properties that are adversely affected by the excessive flows in the sanitary sewer collection system.

The Private Property Protection Program will provide a subsidy to property owners only that have a Des Moines Water Works account for the property for which a subsidy is requested and that contract with a licensed plumber to redirect one or more of the eligible sources of infiltration and inflow to an outlet other than the sanitary sewer system or to install a backwater valve on their private sewer service to protect against surcharges on the public sewer system.

With this program, the City will make a Private Property Protection Program subsidy reimbursement to the property owners who meet the requirements of the program as listed in the key elements below. The reimbursement will be by direct payment of the qualifying subsidy to the property owner. The key elements of the Private Property Protection Program include:

- (a) The Private Property Protection Program will provide a maximum of a \$1,000 subsidy for the cost of any materials and labor for the improvements listed in Section c below to existing structures on private property.
- (b) The work must have been performed between the dates of June 1, 2008 and June 30, 2011.
- (c) The property improvements deemed qualifying for subsidy from the Personal Property Protection Program are limited to the installation of backwater valve, the disconnection of roof leaders from the sanitary sewer service, the installation or redirection of a sump pump to discharge flows from foundation drains and area drains to a non-sanitary sewer outlet such as a rain garden, storm sewer, or the ground surface.
- (d) The work must be performed by a licensed plumber.
- (e) The documentation of cost of the qualifying improvements shall include a copy of an itemized invoice from a licensed plumber or plumbing firm that details the work performed and a copy of the full payment.
- (f) A completed private property protection program subsidy application form and supporting documentation must be submitted to the Des Moines Department of Public Works by no later than August 30, 2011. The account for the sanitary sewer fee charges on the property must be current as to payments at the time of application.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

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