

SANITARY SEWER STORMWATER CONNECTIONS

The sanitary sewer system in Penn Hills is designed to carry sewage in a separate set of pipes from storm water. Storm water that enters the sanitary sewer systems can overload the sewer system causing overflows and residential back-ups. Nearly each time it rains in Southwestern Pennsylvania, our rivers and streams are overwhelmed with polluted storm water and untreated sewage. Because of this, all sanitary only sewer systems that are tributary to the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority (ALCOSAN) are mandated to dye test all structures (residences and commercial buildings) and require removal of all storm water connections that are found.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) has mandated the Municipality of Penn Hills to eliminate all illegal connections to the sanitary portion of our sewer system. An illegal connection is one that allows storm water to enter the sanitary sewer systems. The Municipality of Penn Hills Ordinance No. 2129 of 1992, as amended, prohibits any storm water to be directed into the sanitary sewer system.

Repairs can be as simple as disconnecting downspouts or raising fresh air vents. Before making any repairs to your system, we suggest that you confirm the results we are presenting and contact us if you determine that you do not have an illegal connection(s). When making corrections to the illegal connections, you must verify that no other illegal connections exist, such as sump pumps, french drains, yard drains, low fresh air vents, garages and accessory structures.

If you have received a violation notice you must remedy, remove, disconnect or eliminate all illegal connections. You must correct this violation within six (6) months of receipt of the notice by removing the surface and sub-surface water from the sanitary sewer system. If you make revisions to your plumbing, a plumbing plan must be submitted and approved by the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) before corrections can be performed by either the home owner or an Allegheny County Registered Master Plumber. Please contact the ACHD, McKeesport Plumbing Office, at 412-664-8853 for more information or www.achd.net/plumbing/plumbingstart.html

If you have a question concerning this requirement, please contact the Municipality's Water Pollution Control Department at 412-798-2172 to discuss.

Most repairs may be simple; however, some can be costly. The Municipality of Penn Hills offers 0% and 6% loans of up to \$15,000 to qualifying low-income homeowners for improvement to their homes through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. More information and an application can be obtained by calling the Penn Hills Housing Coordinator at 412-798-2130.

Failure to make the necessary corrections will force the Municipality to take the appropriate action by law to enforce our Ordinance and keep Penn Hills in compliance with their government mandates. Please keep in mind when correcting illegal connections, routing storm water onto your neighbor's property is not permitted under the Allegheny County Plumbing Code.

The Three Rivers Wet Weather Web site contains information of the storm water inflow problem in Allegheny County. Please visit www.3riverswetweather.org/ for more information and other links.