

Foundation Drain Disconnect Handout

The City of Altoona has set aside a funding reimbursement program for citizens to assist in the elimination of subsurface ground water from entering the sanitary sewer system. By doing so this will help reduce the number of times the sanitary sewer system becomes overloaded, thus reducing the number of “back-ups” into your basement during a severe weather event. The City recognizes there are several areas of the community in which these issues seem to persist. Currently discussions are being held and a plan of action is being formulated to address this situation. One of the first steps that will help is this program. Please read through the following information, as it will take you through the steps of each Tier and ultimately compliance.

THE THREE TIERS. There are three different options (Tiers) in this program that are being provided. **PLEASE NOTE: Tier 2 or 3 may be mandatory if you have been contacted by City staff.** These grant amounts apply to the Heritage Homes Phase 4 areas. Please contact City Hall regarding grant fund availability in other areas of the City.

Tier 1. (Reimbursement up to \$2,000.00)

This option applies to you if there is not yet public storm sewer available to you. It would require that the owner install a sump pump and discharge it to an approved location on the property. The intent is to not discharge the water into the street, especially during the cold weather months. Any connections of the building’s foundation drains must be disconnected from the sanitary sewer. This is typically at the floor drain connection. Once the City provides a storm sewer service to the property, then you must connect to that service.

Tier 2. (Reimbursement up to \$2,500.00)

This option has the same basic requirements as Tier 1; however, if you have a public storm sewer available on your side of the street, then you must connect to that system. A licensed plumber will need to run the pipe and connect to the public system. If the City contractor has provided a service stub into the property owner’s yard, then a licensed plumber may not be required to make the service connection. An Altoona Building Department inspector needs to approve the connection prior the pipe being buried.

Tier 3. (Reimbursement up to \$2,800.00)

This option has the same basic requirements as Tier 1; however, if you have a public storm sewer available and it is located on the other side of the street, then you must connect to that system. A licensed plumber will need to run the pipe and connect to the public system.

PERMITS.

Plumbing - Permits are required to perform the work and are available on our permit portal at www.citizenserve.com/altoona. An Iowa-licensed plumbing contractor can obtain a plumbing permit for any Tier listed above. A homeowner can only obtain a permit for a Tier 1 or Tier 2, if a service stub has been provided by the City contractor. The plumbing permit fees for the work are waived.

NOTE: If the dwelling is not owner-occupied, an Iowa-licensed plumbing contractor must be hired to perform the work.

Electrical - If an outlet is not present, then you will need to hire an Iowa-licensed electrical contractor to obtain a permit and perform the work, or you will need to pass the City Homeowner’s Electrical Exam to obtain a permit yourself and perform the work. Only the property title holders on the home are eligible to take the exam. If the work is for the Footing Drain Program, the electrical permit fee will be waived.

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Permits can be obtained through the permit portal. Call 515-957-5128 for more information regarding the exam.

SUMP PUMP REQUIREMENTS.

The sump pump must be contained in a basket that is at least 18 inches in diameter and extending 24 inches below the basement floor level. A check valve must be installed (and accessible) after the pump. The piping from the pump shall be 1 ½ inch schedule 40. The joints and piping shall be glued together. All fittings are to be pressure type. The buildings foundation drains shall be connected to the sump basket and be either the same size as the existing foundation drains or 4 inches in diameter. Based on the situation, different materials can be used, however, in most cases tile should be installed.

Floor Drain – With the foundation drainage tiles disconnected from the floor drain, the drain will need to be replaced. (Depending on the type of floor drain and size of the tile connections, the drain may be able to remain if it is determined that it can be plugged in an approved manner.) The same size of drain may be installed.

****NOTE: Staff would strongly advise that an air gap be installed on the exterior side of the piping, before the pipe enters below-grade.****

PROCESS.

In order to qualify for the program, you must follow the procedure as outlined.

1 Fill out and submit an online application form on the City website: https://www.altoona-iowa.com/departments/public_utilities/stormwater_department/footing_drain_grant_application.php. If you do not have internet access, the form is also available at City Hall. Additional information about the program can be found on the City website. Home > Departments > Public Utilities > Stormwater Department > Footing Drain Program.

2. Staff will contact you to conduct a “pre-inspection” of your property and determine if the property is eligible for the grant and which Tier you would qualify for.

3. Once the “pre-inspection” has been conducted, you or your plumber (depending on the Tier) will need to obtain a plumbing permit. Please visit www.citizenserve.com/altoona for permitting.

4. When the work has been completed and before the work is covered up, you or your plumbing contractor need to call (515) 957-5128 and schedule an inspection with the Building Department to verify compliance and be considered an approved system. City building inspectors are unable to perform same-day inspections so please call at least 24 hours in advance to schedule.

5. After the work has been completed and passed inspection, please provide a copy of all receipts or a paid invoice to City Hall. If you have performed the work yourself, you are able to claim not more than 10 hours for your labor at a cost of \$25.00 per hour. You will need to create a statement for this request. You will only be reimbursed for the actual amount of work performed up to the dollar amount as indicated by the Tier.

NOTE: If you have been contacted by the City to disconnect your foundation drains from the sanitary sewer and are seeking financial assistance, you will need to submit the application form within 180 days after the date of notification.