

EAST WINDSOR WPCA

COLLECTION SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

VERIFYING LATERAL SEWER LINE CONNECTIONS ALONG SOUTH WATER STREET

On August 5th, 2010 East Windsor Building Inspector Rand Stanley notified the WPCA that he was informed by a fisherman that a pipe leading into the Connecticut River appeared to be discharging raw sewage. Chief Operator Edward Alibozek accompanied Rand Stanley for a search along the river bank on South Water Street.



Gaining access to the discharge pipe included cutting a path through the brush along the Connecticut River bank.

Interestingly, the low level of the Connecticut River allowed this lateral to “appear”. Under normal flow conditions, it would be difficult to have witnessed this problem, helping us understand why this issue had not been reported before.

Once the lateral was found, it took a coordinated effort between the WPCA and the Highway Department to discount the chance that a storm drain was inadvertently connected to a sewer lateral during the 2004 upgrade to the drainage system. Mark Coulter, Highway Foreman, involved himself and his

staff to assist ruling out a “cross-connection”. To verify that the storm drains were not tied into the sewer collection system, we used non-toxic dye to establish that the storm water drains had integrity.



Discharging debris along river bank

Once we were able to narrow down that it wasn't a cross-connected storm drain, we looked for an obvious culprit. Some detective work lead us to a home that had recently gone through an addition. We were able to gain access to the basement for WPCA Operator Marc Brennen and Building Inspector Rand Stanley to inspect the sanitary sewer lateral leaving the home.



Green Dye verifies we have solved the mystery

The piping in the basement lined up with the discharge pipe along the river bank. We dye tested this home and within minutes we were able to verify that this home's sewer lateral was not connected to the sanitary sewer.

LATERAL SEWER LINE CONNECTIONS ALONG SOUTH WATER STREET

The home owner had been paying a sewer user fee each year, believing they were connected, and is completely innocent. The fault is only that old homes occasionally are not tied in where they are supposed to be.

Mike Caronna, Director of Environmental Services, North Central District Health Department, issued a statement on August 19th, 2010 to Art Enderle at the East Windsor WPCA stating the following...

"...Based on a complaint and your department's due diligence, a sewer overflow from 124 South Water Street was found to be discharging into the Connecticut River. As discussed, if the property owner cannot arrange the funding to disconnect the overflow pipe and connect into the sewer main, it would be advised that the town take on the project, with the owner's permission, or through a court order.

This would alleviate the need to condemn the property and have to relocate the occupants, which is another cost the town would have to assume at least initially, until a lien against the property can be executed or the owner pays the bills.

Knowing that all of the houses along South Water Street are old, it would be advisable to conduct inspections along South Water Street to determine if other houses are also discharging to the Connecticut River or connected to the existing sewer main."

We were informed by Mike Caronna that neighboring towns have had issues of homes discharging illegally as well (albeit unknowingly, in most cases). This isn't a concern unique to East Windsor. Knowing that one home wasn't connected is warning enough that we have begun a plan of action to dye test each home along South Water Street to protect public health. The Town of East Windsor WPCA will begin Dye Testing work during the month of October as part of the ***Sewer System Evaluation Survey (SSES)***. This ***SSES*** is another step in East Windsor's sewer collection system repair program.

What is a Dye Test? Dye testing involves placing a non-staining water soluble dye in the plumbing of your property and flushing it with water. The area is then examined for the appearance of traces of dye.

What will be East Windsor's Procedure? An East Windsor WPCA Operator will place a small amount of dye in a sink or toilet and run some water to carry the dye through the plumbing in your home and out to the pipes in the street. The Operator will ask to look at the plumbing in the basement, to verify if the plumbing in your home flows through one pipe to the street. If there is more than one sewer service connection, a second dye test on that connection will be conducted. Another technician in the street will open a sanitary sewer manhole to determine if the dye appears.

What does the Dye Test Determine? Upon the conclusion of the dye test, the Operator will determine whether or not the property is properly connected to the sanitary sewer system. If the property is properly connected, no further action will be necessary. However, if the property is found to be improperly connected, further work will need to be conducted in order to connect to the sewer system.



A sign that residential discharge is reaching the sewer line

Section 22a-430-3 of The Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies - (f) **Proper operation and maintenance.**

- (1) The permittee shall at all times properly operate and maintain all facilities and systems and parts thereof for wastewater collection, storage, treatment and control which are installed or used by the permittee to achieve compliance with the terms and conditions of the permit. Proper operation and maintenance includes but is not limited to effective performance, adequate funding, and adequate operator staffing and training, including the employment of certified operators as may be required by the commissioner pursuant to sections 22a-416-1 through 22a-416-10 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, as amended, and adequate laboratory and process controls, including appropriate quality assurance procedures.