

INFLOW & INFILTRATION REDUCTION PROGRAM

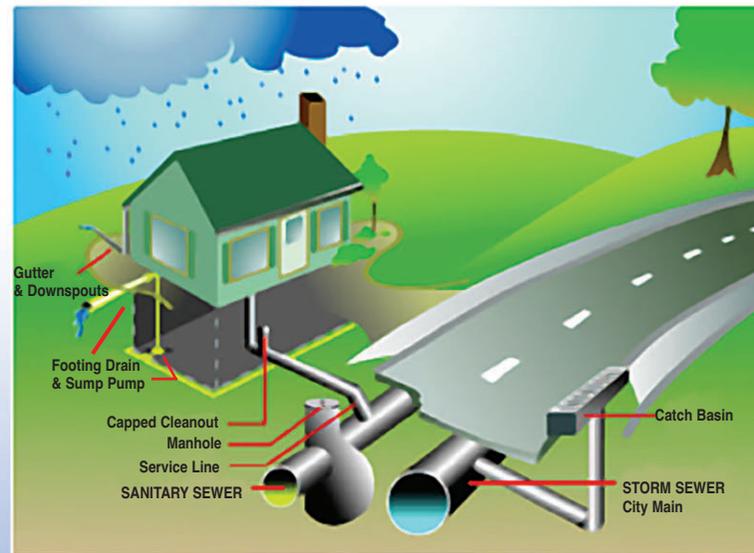
Blue Earth has two sewer systems. The sanitary sewer system takes water to the Wastewater Treatment Plant where it is treated prior to discharge to the Blue Earth River. The storm sewer system collects rain and snowmelt from the streets and adjoining properties and carries it to the Blue Earth River or storm water detention ponds.

Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) are two ways that water is misdirected into the sanitary sewer system, usually after a rainfall. Infiltration occurs when ground water seeps into the sanitary sewer system through cracks or leaks in pipes. Inflow occurs when rainwater is misdirected to the sanitary sewer system instead of storm sewers.

Storm water from rain and snowmelt seeps through the ground along the sides of houses and enters footing drains. In some homes, these footing drains direct the storm water into the sanitary sewer. As users of the sanitary sewer, residents pay the cost of treating this storm water, which is unnecessary and expensive. Additionally, the excess storm water can overload the sanitary sewer and resulting in sewage overflows. These overflows may require wastewater treatment plant bypass directly to the Blue Earth River, or create basement sewer backups, both environmental and health risks.

The City is committed to eliminating I/I. The City has completed a comprehensive analysis of the public sanitary sewer system. This analysis identified public and private sources of I/I. The city is currently identifying private sources and conducting improvements to reduce private and public sources of I/I. If the City is not successful, it will face fines from the State of Minnesota and potential limits on new development.

You can make a difference in reducing I/I. First, check to make sure your rain gutters and downspouts do not connect to sanitary lines. You may have an illegal connection if your downspouts go into the ground rather than discharge to the yard or storm-sewer. Also, inspect your sump pump to make sure that it is being piped out into the yard rather than piped into your sanitary service.



PRIVATE INSPECTION PROGRAM

The City of Blue Earth has designed an I/I Reduction Program to inspect homes to determine whether or not they are contributing water from footing drains or roof drains to the sanitary sewer.

Each year the City will designate areas of the City for mandatory inspections. Priority areas are neighborhoods of the City experiencing overflows. The City by ordinance has authority to inspect homes. Failure to comply can result charges of a misdemeanor and fines, as well as surcharges on sewer bills.

Identification of illegal connections will result in the City requiring corrective actions at the homeowners expense.