



Department Source: City Utilities - Sewer/Stormwater

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: July 3, 2017

Re: Amending Chapter 22 to Establish a Cost Reimbursement Program for the Installation of Pressure Sewers, Backflow Prevention Devices or Removal of Plumbing Fixtures

## Executive Summary

Staff has prepared for Council consideration an ordinance to amend Chapter 22 of the City Code of Ordinances to establish a cost reimbursement program for a portion of the cost for property owners to install pressure sewers, backflow prevention devices or to remove plumbing fixtures. This program is intended to assist property owners that experience sanitary sewer backups during periods of heavy rainfall and should reduce the frequency of backups into these buildings.

## Discussion

The Sewer Utility currently has projects in place to reduce inflow and infiltration into the sanitary sewer system. Inflow and infiltration into the sanitary sewer system can cause the capacity of the system to be exceeded and result in sanitary sewer overflows to the environment and backups into buildings. The rehabilitation of the public sewer system and removal of private sources of inflow and infiltration will take many years, most likely decades. During this time, property owners that have buildings subject to sanitary sewer backups during heavy rain events will continue to experience these backups. In addition, despite the efforts to reduce inflow and infiltration, the sewer system will still have instances when it is surcharged and overflows or backups will occur. Inflow and infiltration reduction and sewer rehabilitation will reduce the frequency and duration of sewer overflows or backups during heavy rain events, however, it will not eliminate all overflows or backups.

In an effort to assist property owners that experience wet weather related sanitary sewer backups, staff has developed a cost reimbursement program for installation of pressure sewers, backflow prevention devices or the removal of plumbing fixtures to reduce the frequency of the backups. This program would reimburse property owners that complete this work for 50% of the cost of their preferred method of protecting their property from sewer backups. There are two different funding levels proposed. The first funding level is to convert the plumbing in the lower levels of the building to a pressure sewer system. This is the most reliable method of protection and would be reimbursed at 50% of the cost up to a maximum of \$4,000. The second funding level is to install a backflow prevention device or eliminate fixtures that backup and would be reimbursed at 50% of the cost up to a maximum of \$1000. This program also would require a sump pump be installed in buildings, if needed and would be reimbursed at 50% of cost up to a maximum of \$1000, this would reduce inflow and infiltration into the public sewer system.

In addition, this program would require all sources of inflow and infiltration be removed from the property at the expense of the property owner, many of these are available to be



reimbursed through the City's inflow and infiltration reduction program described in Section 22-217.3 of the City Code. There is also a financial assistance program in Section 22-217.2 of the City Code that a property owner could use for sources that are not reimbursable.

## Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: The fiscal year 2017 and 2018 budgets include \$100,000 for reimbursement to property owners for Inflow and Infiltration reduction, these funds can be used for both programs on a first come, first served basis.

Long-Term Impact: Funds will need to be included in the operating budget in future years for this reimbursement program. At this time, \$100,000 per year is anticipated with the cost decreasing as the number of buildings with sewer backups is reduced.

## Vision & Strategic Plan Impact

### Vision Impacts:

Primary Impact: Environment, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

### Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

### Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Environmental Management, Secondary Impact: Infrastructure, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

## Legislative History

Date	Action
10/20/2014	Report – Sanitary Sewer Backflow Device Program
02/17/2014	Report – Aldeah Sewer and Storm Water Issues
07/05/2011	Report – Backwater Protection

## Suggested Council Action

Approve the ordinance to amend Chapter 22 of the City Code to establish a cost reimbursement program for the installation of pressure sewers, backflow prevention devices or the removal of plumbing fixtures in private building experiencing sewer backups during heavy rainfall.