HSA
SEWER PROJECT FAQs

Q: Why do some residents in the Phase II project area have only 45 days to comply with the HSA water tightness regulations?

A: Some homeowners in the Phase II project area are on a 45 day timeframe for compliance because their sewer lateral tap was relocated during construction of the new sanitary sewer main. Relocated taps are installed at the homeowner's request, or when necessary due to connection issues identified in the field during construction. Most residents that receive relocated taps are required to connect to the new system within a certain timeframe because their building sewer remains tied into the existing sewer until the homeowner's new private side lateral is constructed and connected to the relocated taps. This timeframe is necessary because the HSA's contractor is responsible for conversion of the old sanitary sewer system into a groundwater removal system, and this conversion cannot be completed with the existing sewer lateral connected to the old system.

Posted 9/19/2017

Q: What is Infiltration and Inflow (I/I)?

A: Infiltration is groundwater, or, groundwater that is influenced by surface water, which enters sewer pipes (interceptors, collectors, manholes, or side sewers) through holes, breaks, joint failures, connection failures and other openings. Infiltration quantities often exhibit seasonal variation in response to groundwater levels. Storm events can trigger a rise in groundwater levels and increase infiltration flows. The highest infiltration flows are observed following significant storm events or following prolonged periods of precipitation.

Inflow is surface water that enters the wastewater system from yard, roof and footing drains, from cross-connections with storm drains, downspouts and sump pumps. Inflow occurs as a result of storm events such as rainfall, snowfall, springs or snow melt that contribute to excessive sewer flows. Peak inflow can occur during heavy storm events when storm sewer systems are surcharged, resulting in hydraulic backups and local ponding. Inflow and infiltration is clear water that enters the sanitary sewer system from a variety of sources.

Infiltration occurs when groundwater seeps into sewer pipes through cracks, leaky pipe joints and/or deteriorated manholes.

Inflow, occurs in direct proportion to the amount of rainfall. Inflow is storm water that enters the wastewater system through rain leaders, basement sump pumps or foundation drains illegally connected directly to a sanitary sewer pipe.

Posted 9/21/2017

Q: Why is I/I a problem?

A: I/I ends up at the regional wastewater treatment plant, where it must be treated like sewage, resulting in higher treatment costs.

I/I often requires new and larger wastewater treatment facilities, conveyance systems or holding tanks to convey, store and treat larger volumes of flow. This additional infrastructure results in higher capital expenditures.

I/I flows contribute to sewer system surcharging into local homes and overflows into the region's waterways (CSOs), negatively impacting public health and the environment. It is estimated that inflow and infiltration make up 85 percent of peak flows during winter and rain events and as much as 70 percent of this peak flow comes from privately owned sewer networks.

Protecting the environment and decreasing wastewater treatment costs are the benefit of a responsible I/I control program.

Posted 9/25/2017

Q: Why has the HSA decided to only replace certain sections of the sanitary sewer mains?

A: Phase I of the Sanitary Sewer Improvements Project was initiated as part of the HSA's mandated corrective action plan (CAP) for the M2 sub-basin (Legion Park Interceptor). Later, corrective action was mandated in the M11 sub-basin to address surcharging concerns in the East Fir Street area. These two CAPs were later combined into the M2/M11 Cap Plan and make up the Phase I project area.

Phase II was possible due to surplus PENNVEST monies secured by the HSA to fund the Phase I project. The Jones Street area sub-basin was selected as the focus area for the Phase II project due to its aged infrastructure, significant I/I contribution and connection to the Jones Street CSO.

Posted 9/25/2017

Q: Why are only some portions of the Borough required to comply with the HSA's water tightness regulations?

A: HSA regulations require that:

At the completion of all HSA mainline sewer replacement projects, all residential homes which have been provided sanitary sewer service by the Authority, must successfully pass an air or water pressure test.

Therefore, only those homes that are part of the sewer replacement project areas described above are required to meet the HSA water tightness regulations at this time.

Posted 9/25/2017

Q: Will all of the larger public buildings in the project areas, such as the HASD buildings, churches and YMCA required to comply with the HSA water tightness regulations?

A: Yes.
All buildings – residential, commercial and industrial – located within the project areas and connected to the HSA's new sanitary sewer main will be required to comply with the HSA's water tightness regulations. Compliance requirements for residential and commercial/industrial properties are addressed in §1703 of the HSA rules and regulations.

Posted 9/25/2017

Q: Are there financing/funding options available to assist homeowner's with the costs associated with meeting compliance with the HSA's watertightness regulations?

A: Yes, there are financing/funding options available from the following institutions:

Institution:

S&T Bank
1100 Logan Boulevard, Altoona, PA
814-941-1080
stbank.com/hollidaysburgproject

Program Details:

Unsecured loan, minimum amount of $2,000. APR starting @ 5.75%. Loan term based on amount borrowed. Loan to be used for the Hollidaysburg sewer line project.

Institution:

PHFA/PENNVEST
855-827-3466
www.phfa.org/programs/repairs.aspx

Program Details:

Secured loan (up to $25,000). Up to 20 years at a fixed interest rate currently as low as 1.75%. No prepayment penalty if the loan is paid off early. Funds may be used for design charges, construction fees and costs, inspection and permit fees, and most loan origination fees.

Posted 10/31/2017

Q: How exactly is pressure testing done? What needs to be tested?

A: The system to be tested must first be isolated. This is done by installing a plug at each opening and connection to the building sewer (as illustrated in Figure 1). The system is then pressurized with compressed air. All buried piping, including under-slab piping, must be tested from the home to the property line. In order for the system to pass the pressure test and meet compliance with the HSA's watertightness regulations, the system must hold five (5) psi for 15 minutes.

Typical test points are as follows:

Home with Basement Service (Figure 1):

- View Port at HSA/Customer lateral transition
- Vent assembly
- Floor drains, sink drains and toilet assemblies (at or near floor level).
- Main sewer/vent stack (at or near floor level).

Home with without Basement Service (Figure 1):

- View Port at HSA/Customer lateral transition
- Vent assembly
- Building sewer at foundation wall

Figure 1