

**PETERS TOWNSHIP
SANITARY AUTHORITY**

111 BELL DRIVE
McMURRAY, PA 15317-3415
PHONE: 724-941-6709
FAX: 724-941-2283
Web Site: ptsaonline.org



James J. Miskis, Manager
Mark A. Chucuddy, Asst. Manager
Patricia L. Mowry, Financial Controller
Gary A. Parks, Special Projects Manager
Diane L. Gregor, Administrative Asst.

June 8, 2011

«Name»
«Mailing_Address»
«city_zip»

**REQUEST FOR INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING IN A
SANITARY SEWER PILOT STUDY**

Dear: «Name»

The Peters Township Sanitary Authority (Authority) needs your assistance in the development of a comprehensive and equitable program to eliminate the infiltration of groundwater into the sanitary sewer system through defects in private building sewers and building drains. Your participation in this pilot project will benefit you, your neighbors and all residents in the Authority's service area. Best of all, there will be very little, if any, cost to you even if your building sewer or drain needs to be repaired or replaced to eliminate groundwater infiltration! The repairs would be made by the Authority or its contractor, in exchange for your cooperation in participating in the pilot program.

*The **building sewer** is the portion of the sewer that connects your house to the Authority's sewer main, and which is owned and maintained by you. The **building drain** is the lowest portion of your interior house plumbing, located beneath the basement floor.*

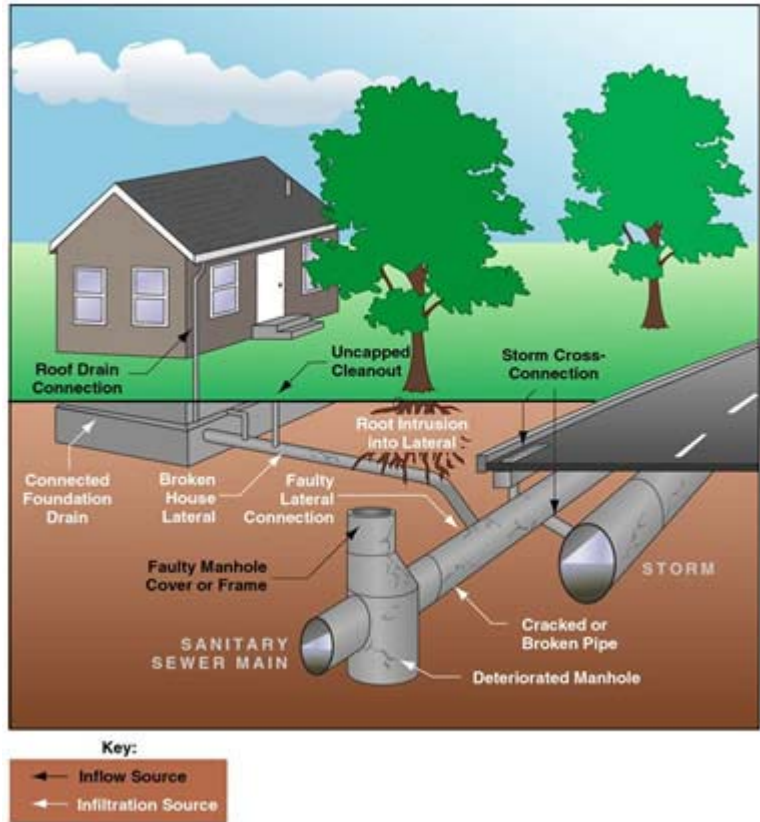
The discharge of groundwater or rainwater into the public sewer in any form is prohibited, and the Authority could compel property owners to eliminate the groundwater as identified during wet weather inspections. However, due to the widespread nature of the problem and the multitude of variables involved, the Authority believes it must first develop a comprehensive program to systematically address the problem. Unfortunately, it is nearly impossible to develop a program that addresses this complex issue and expect it to be successful without having access to a group of customers' properties to test out ideas and concepts, and measure progress.

This is where your assistance comes in. The Authority is proposing to undertake a Pilot Program in the Friar Lane area, involving the 83 homes that are connected to the Authority's Friar Lane trunk sewer.

Why Friar Lane? The Authority rehabilitated the public sewer serving the Friar Lane area in 2005 at a total cost of \$300,000. This project failed to reduce the volume of groundwater entering the Friar Lane sewer during severe rain events. During and immediately after severe rain events the past few years the Authority has performed internal inspections of the public sewer main. During these investigations and other specialized testing, the Authority has collected information that confirms the vast majority of groundwater infiltration entering the Friar Lane public sewer during and immediately after severe rain events originates from the private building sewer and/or building drain. In several instances where this inspection and testing identified extreme volumes of groundwater or rainwater entering the public sewer, your neighbors volunteered to make repairs at their cost to eliminate the source of the water. This has helped however, large volumes of groundwater remain.

This problem is not limited to the Friar Lane area sewers, but is widespread throughout the older areas of Peters Township as well as most other communities. It is this problem that is responsible for the endless cycle of multi-million dollar treatment plant capacity expansions. During 2011 the Authority is again expanding its treatment plant at a cost of \$1.5 million dollars to address the groundwater infiltration issue. In order to break this otherwise needless cycle of plant expansions the Authority will have to begin to compel property owners to repair the portion of the sewer system they own and maintain to eliminate the source of the groundwater infiltration.

The Authority recognizes your participation in the proposed Pilot Program may be a large inconvenience to you, and the Authority is willing to provide a financial incentive to each homeowner to participate, so that we may collect the valuable information that we can not collect otherwise.



Participation in the Pilot Program is strictly voluntary, but encouraged

The Pilot Program would generally consist of:

- Each participating property owner would execute an agreement identifying the terms and conditions of the Pilot Program.
- Each participating property owner will receive a minimum payment of \$200 for participation in the program, even if your property passes the initial test! Based on the testing completed, we estimate that 20 to 30% of the properties will not require repairs.
- Rainfall simulation testing would be performed by applying a volume of water equivalent to a severe rainstorm to various points on the property under test conditions. A camera inspection of the building sewer and drain would be performed during the test to locate sources of groundwater infiltration.
- The Authority will pay for required repairs identified in the testing up to a cumulative maximum of \$3,000 per participant.
- The Authority would accept the “Pass” results of the Pilot Program rainfall simulation tests in place of the standard Time of Sale Dye Test for one year. Thereby, if you sell your home within one year of testing, a Dye Test (at a cost \$150.00) will not be required.

The costs to the participating properties would be limited to:

- If repairs to the building sewer are made by the Authority we ask that you cover the cost of final lawn restoration. Driveway restoration would be the Authority’s responsibility.
- If you have any illegal direct connection such as an roof downspout, area drain, or sump pump connected to the sanitary sewer, the cost of disconnection and rerouting will be the property owner’s. The Authority has dye tested all downspouts and area drains therefore, we are 99% certain none of these are connected.

By participating in this Pilot Program, you will help us to remove large amounts of groundwater that would need to be conveyed and treated resulting in unnecessarily rate increases. More importantly, you will be helping the Authority develop a program to address the issue of groundwater infiltration from private building sewers and building drains that is fair and equitable to the overall customer base, and succeeds in its goal of reducing groundwater infiltration cost-effectively for our customers.

Is this something that would interest you? All other efforts to reduce the groundwater infiltration during severe rain events have failed. We have to start thinking outside the box to solve the problem. As part of our proposed Pilot Program the homeowner will have their sewer inspected and repaired if necessary, the Authority will gain valuable data, and all residents of our service area will benefit from what we learn and by the reduction of unnecessarily treating rainwater and groundwater.

We will need the majority of the 83 homeowners to participate to make this program a success. Please talk to your neighbors and encourage them to participate and to attend one of the information sessions identified below. If enough residents do not participate, or simply do not respond, the Authority will have to approach a different neighborhood to conduct the Pilot Program, and you and your neighbors will miss the opportunity to have repairs made at little or no cost.

Please complete the enclosed Letter of Interest and forward to my attention right away. If you have any questions, please call me or plan to attend one of our information sessions on June 7th.

**PILOT PROGRAM
INFORMATION SESSIONS**
Tuesday, June 22nd
1:00 PM & 7:00 PM
Peters Township Sanitary Authority Office
111 Bell Drive
Lower Level Meeting Room (rear entrance)

I look forward to working with you. Enclosed is a prior newsletter that provides more background information on the groundwater infiltration issue.

Sincerely,

Gary A. Parks
Special Projects Manager