

Major Rain Events

During major rain events, the Town of Niagara's sewer system becomes overwhelmed. The five sewer lift stations have become full to overcapacity at times. When the ground is saturated and an inch of rain falls within an hour, any sewer system would become overwhelmed. The rain event on 05/01/17 was especially challenging. The entire water and sewer department, along with the parks department were out all night manning two 6" pumps and a 4" pump in Belden Center alone.

Last year the Town had sewer lines relined and manholes sealed at a cost of \$966,612.65. All manhole lids have a plastic liner that does not let water in. It does **not** mean the manhole is full as some believe.

One of the most common problems in Belden Center is water backing up into cellar's during a highwater event. As a Homeowner you have a responsibility to alleviate your problems by doing a few things. As a sewer Superintendent I have a responsibility to help you achieve those common goals.

1. Block or cap off your floor drain. It is the most common place water is allowed into your cellar. Expandable plugs are handy for this and are common at any hardware store.
2. Tighten any cap on your trap (located toward the front of the cellar in most cases). Any cap not screwed in tight or just loosely sitting on top, can and will leak during a major rain event because water has a lot of back pressure.
3. Check all fittings in the cellar. They should be tight with **no slack**, install a Fernco, especially deep sinks.
4. Get a plug for your deep sink. Anywhere water can back up into your cellar should be addressed.
5. If water is coming in around the foundation, **install a sump pump**. If your cellar continuously floods, investing in a sump pump should be your primary goal.
6. Roof gutters should **not** be tied into the sanitary sewer. It only adds to our issues and it is against Town Code. Any water considered ground or rain water is **not allowed** to enter the sanitary sewer. We pay to have the sewer water treated and it only adds to the problem. Storm water and sewer water **MUST** be kept separate. It is illegal for a sump line to be tied into a sanitary line. It is illegal for a deep sink, washer or shower to be tied into a storm drain.

Everyone is anxious for their homes during events such as the one we all just experienced. This department knows what needs to be done during these times. Safety of our residents is our primary concern. Tensions do not need to be exacerbated. This department works for the entire town, not just a certain area.

Call the office at 297-2150 ext 123 and make an appointment for an inspection of your basement at no cost, and we will offer our suggestions to help you with your issues.