



Developer Offset Mitigation Program

The City of Ann Arbor created the Developer Offset Mitigation Program (DOM) to protect the health and safety of our community and the environment, using a citywide approach. The purpose of the DOM is to reduce overall flow to the sanitary sewer system.

By reducing the flow in the sanitary sewer system, we do two important things:

- Reduce sanitary sewer overflows
- Reduce unnecessary treatment of stormwater

The DOM program requires new developments that will place additional burdens on the sanitary sewer system to offset the flow the new development will add. The City has a webpage with DOM program guidelines and a useful video at:

<http://www.a2gov.org/departments/engineering/pages/developer-offset-mitigation-program.aspx>

Why was the Developer Offset Mitigation Program Created?

Large rainfall events can cause massive inflow of stormwater into the sanitary sewer pipes, temporarily exceeding the system's capacity. By reducing the amount of stormwater entering the sanitary sewer system, the city can regain system capacity to reduce the chances of sanitary sewer overflows.

Here are some of the ways that developers have mitigated flows:

- Demolished or disconnected buildings from the system,
- Disconnected swimming pools from the sanitary system,
- Renovated buildings and replaced old fixtures with low flow fixtures and
- Disconnected footing drains for homeowners.

What are Footing Drains?

In structures built before 1981, footing drains (also known as foundation drains) were often connected directly to the sanitary sewer system. In 1982, building code in Ann Arbor and many other cities changed to require footing drains to use sump pumps or similar systems to direct footing drain flows to the stormwater system.

Studies performed in Ann Arbor and in other cities have shown that footing drain flows during rain events are a major cause of system capacity issues and increase collection system flows as much as 10-20 times the normal dry weather flow.

On average, each home with a connected footing drain adds 3,500 to 10,500 gallons per year of clean water that must be transported to the wastewater treatment plant and treated. A number of times during the 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s, large rainstorms caused the sanitary sewer system to exceed capacity, causing sewage to back up in homes in some neighborhoods.



What is a Footing Drain Disconnection?

A footing drain disconnection (FDD) is defined as identifying all direct connections between a footing drain and the sanitary drain piping of a property, removing the connection(s), and directing the footing drain flows to an approved stormwater discharge location.

How the Developer Offset Mitigation Program Works

- 1** A developer's representative (often, a contractor) may contact the homeowner, by leaving a flier or door hanger at homes. Interested homeowners may contact the developer or developer's representative to determine if your home is eligible for disconnection.
- 2** If you have not been contacted by a developer but would like to be considered for the DOM program, you can contact Alison Heatley, DOM Program Manager, with the City of Ann Arbor. She can explain how the program works and provide you with list of contractors who can review your home and situation.

FAQ for Homeowners

Q. Who can disconnect my footing drains and install a sump pump?

A. A licensed contractor can perform the FDD and install a sump pump and discharge system.

Q. How much does an FDD cost?

A. There is no charge to homeowners to participate in the Developer Offset Mitigation program. All costs are borne by the developer. Homeowners negotiate and contract directly with the developer and contractor to have the work performed. In some cases, a developer may decline to disconnect the footing drains in a home because the work would be complex or costly.

Q. Will my FDD and sump pump installation include a backup system?

A. Installing a backup system is entirely optional for the homeowner. The City has a guide on Sump Pump Backup Options on its website at [A2gov.org/sumppumps](https://a2gov.org/sumppumps).

Q. The contractor wants to install my sump pump in a location I don't want, such as underneath my bedroom, or in the middle of my basement. What should I do?

A. Alternate sump pump locations (those that are not installed at the lowest point of the basement) can create risks of flooding from the sump pit. To be effective in collecting groundwater, directing it to a sump pit and pumping the groundwater away from your home, disconnections must begin at the footing drain tie-in to the sanitary, and be re-directed to the sump location by either being trenched or tunneled.

Contact for Additional Questions

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