

# Flooding and Drainage Problems

When trying to figure out how to respond to a flooding or drainage problem, first identify the source of the problem by asking these questions:

## **Where do you live?**

If the property is adjacent to a creek, a pond, or a large storm sewer, there may be **surface water** flooding issues from these features.

## **Is there water coming through the basement walls or floor?**

If water is coming through basement or lower level walls or through the concrete floor, the issue is likely related to **groundwater**.

## **Is there water coming from your floor drain or into your bathtub (toilet, wash tub, etc.)?**

If water is backing up from a floor drain, lower level toilet, or lower level shower or bathtub, it is possible the issue is related to a **sanitary sewer backup**.

## **Is there water flowing into your home through a door or window?**

If there is water flowing into the structure, the issue may be related to **surface water flooding** or **localized drainage**.

## **Is there water standing in your yard or flowing through your yard?**

If the concern centers around water ponding, or standing, in part or a yard, or water flowing onto a property from adjacent property, the issue is likely related to **localized drainage**.

Once you determine the nature of the issue, take the corresponding actions as follows:

### **Surface Water Flooding**

If surface water is actually flowing into a structure, immediately call the Town Highway Department at 716-686-3450. Highway staff will evaluate the situation as soon as possible and take appropriate action.

## **Groundwater**

The Town is not responsible for groundwater issues. If your basement is prone to groundwater flooding, make sure all valuables and electronics are placed sufficiently high enough to stay dry.

## **Sanitary Sewer Backup**

If your sanitary sewer is backing up, immediately call Sewer Maintenance at 716-896-7502. Staff will evaluate the situation as soon as possible and take appropriate action if it is an issue with the Town's main line.

The property owner is responsible for back-ups resulting in blockages between the house and the sewer main.

If this situation is encountered outside of normal business hours, continue to call 716-896-7502 as the phone is transferred to a manned station and the Sewer Maintenance on-call staff will be notified.

## **Localized Drainage Issues**

The Town is responsible for storm water runoff when it enters the street or an off-street, Town-owned storm sewer facility. Each property owner is responsible for drainage within their property.

Common causes of ponding or standing water in a yard include frozen ground, saturated ground, or blocked drainage (tree roots, gardens, fences, landscaping, sheds, etc.).

If standing water is a result of actions by adjoining property owners, an owner who is improperly directing water to another's property may be violating State and local Property Maintenance Codes. Contact the Town's Department of Neighborhood Preservation at 716-897-7281 to request a Complaint Inspection. If the issue is not a Property Maintenance Code issue, the two property owners are responsible for working the issue out.

Be ready to provide the Town staff with your name, address, phone number, and a general description of the issue. The information will be placed on a list. Staff will investigate these issues as resources permit.

## **How Property Owners Can Help**

See **How Property Owners Can Help** on the Inflow & Infiltration web page.