
2010 BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

Voluntary Downspout Disconnection Program & the City-Wide Mandatory Program

Issue/Background:

- The City of Toronto had a voluntary downspout disconnection program in place for over ten years. Due to the low uptake, in November 2007, Council approved discontinuing the voluntary program and implemented a mandatory program.
- Benefits to disconnecting downspouts include reducing basement flooding and improving river and lake water quality.
- The cost to the City to service those on the waiting list for downspout disconnection, as well as the cost to provide assistance to low income property owners is estimated to be \$41.0 million in Capital costs and \$16.2 million in Operating costs over the eight year period of 2008 to 2016.
- Additional staff is required to process the waiting list for the former voluntary program and assist with the roll-out and enforcement of new by-law requirements for mandatory downspout disconnection program.
- Low income property owners (household income of \$40,000 or less) are eligible for full financial support under the Mandatory Downspout Disconnection Program (MDDP), on a City-wide basis, as approved by Council in November, 2007.

Questions/Answers:

Are there legal implications to discontinuing the program?

The Voluntary Downspout Disconnection Program was discontinued by Council on November 19 and 20, 2007. There are a number of residents who have signed a Permission to Release Agreement and are currently on the waiting list to be disconnected. The City may be legally obligated to continue with these disconnections. This needs to be confirmed with the City's legal staff.

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