

2015 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

Mandatory Downspout Disconnection Program (MDDP)

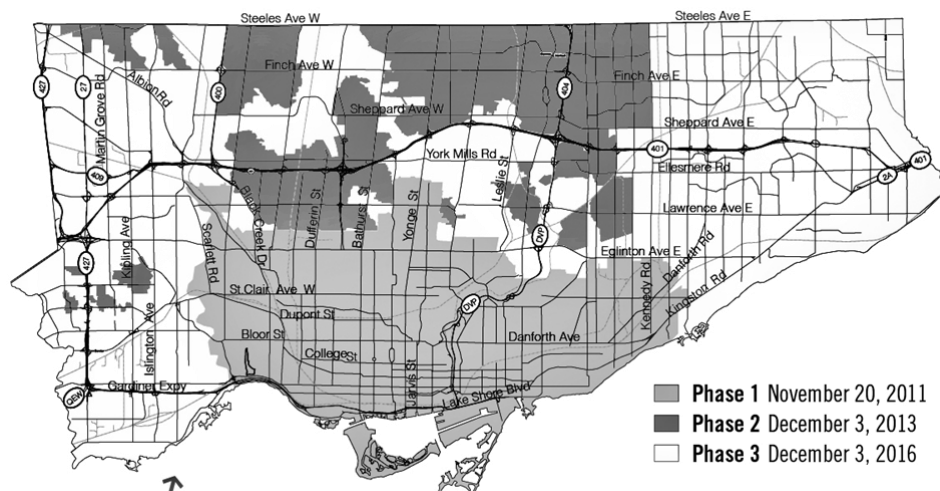
Background:

- Budget Committee, at its meeting of February 4, 2015, during consideration of the 2015 Rate Supported Budgets - Toronto Water and 2015 Water and Wastewater Rates and Service Fees, requested a briefing note on:
 - details on the completion rate and enforcement strategy for the mandatory downspout disconnection program.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.BU4.1>

Issue:

- City Council approved a Mandatory Downspout Disconnection Program (MDDP) for combined sewer service areas in 2007. Following the completion of engineering assessments in the chronic basement flooding areas City Council, in 2008 approved the expansion of the program across the City.
- Mandatory Downspout Disconnection is enforced under the Municipal Code Chapter §681-11S, Sewers. As a result, the by-law does not permit the connection of a downspout from a building directly or indirectly to a sanitary, combined or storm sewer connection unless an exemption has been granted by the General Manager
- The by-law requirements come into effect in three phases:
 - Phase 1:** Approximately 200,000 properties in the areas served by combined sewers
 - Phase 2:** Approximately 90,000 properties in study areas identified as basement flooding-prone
 - Phase 3:** Approximately 216,000 properties in the remaining areas of the city



Key Points:

Completion Rate

- Implementation of Phases 1 and 2 of the program has been completed. Implementation of Phase 3 will be completed in December 2016.
- In 2013, Toronto Water staff undertook a field assessment to gain an understanding of compliance by assessing the rate of disconnection following the by-law's implementation in Phase 1 and ahead of its implementation in Phases 2 and 3. Based on the 14,414 properties surveyed, the rate of disconnection for each phase is shown in the following Table 1.

Table 1: Rate of Disconnection

Phase 1	79.77%
Phase 2	63.82%
Phase 3	60.95%

- Computer simulation modelling used in the engineering reviews for chronic basement flooding study areas has shown that a 100% attainment of downspout disconnection is not possible, nor required to achieve a significant reduction in the risk of basement flooding as a result of sewer surcharging from connected downspouts. The modelling has shown that risk of basement flooding can be significantly reduced if approximately 70% of the houses in a given sewershed are disconnected from the storm sewer.

Enforcement Strategy

- The 2013 field assessment demonstrated a high compliance rate in Phase 1. In Phases 2 and 3, the field assessment showed a lower disconnection rate, as expected, however on track to achieve a comparable disconnection rate to Phase 1 post implementation. Additional field assessments are planned to measure post implementation compliance rates in Phases 2 and 3.
- The data illustrates that a sufficient disconnection rate can be achieved largely without enforcement. Our focus has been on achieving voluntary compliance through targeted pre-deadline communication and ongoing education as opposed to penalizing property owners who have not yet disconnected. To maximize the rate of disconnection across all phases, a multi-year enhanced compliance outreach strategy will continue as an alternative to enforcement. Attachment 1 outlines the outreach strategy.

Questions & Answers:

- **What is done when a complaint regarding a *connected* downspout is received?**

Information on the importance and benefits (both for the City and for the Property Owner) regarding downspout disconnection is mailed directly to the offending property. Support is then provided via a dedicated telephone line, email address and through site visits (as resources allow) to maximize compliance.

- **How many property owners have received direct program support to date?**

Approximately 18,000 property owners have received direct program support since 2011 through a dedicated telephone line and email address.

- **What is done when a complaint regarding a disconnected downspout is received?**

The complaint is referred to Municipal Licensing and Standards to investigate and enforce the requirements of the Municipal Code Chapter 629 (Property Standards) as required.

- **Is a downspout disconnection rate of 100% possible?**

No, included in the 2013 field assessment was an examination of the maximum potential disconnection rate in each ward beyond what has already been achieved. Attachment 2 shows the maximum potential disconnection rate by Ward.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Mandatory Downspout Disconnection Outreach Strategy

Attachment 2: Figure – Disconnection Rate by Ward

Mandatory Downspout Disconnection Outreach Strategy

Activity	Area	Details
Information Packages	All Phases	Information packages are delivered to property owners six months in advance of the deadline dates. Each information package contains full program details and important guidelines to consider before disconnecting.
Information cards	All Phases	All properties in Phases 2 & 3 are issued an information card 12 months in advance of the deadline dates. The cards are also being used to remind property owners who have not yet disconnected, about their responsibility to do so, as required.
Public open house events	All Phases	In conjunction with Basement Flooding studies, staff have attended numerous events to provide residents information on the program requirements.
City Publications	All Phases	Program information has been provided to residents in a variety of City publications including: Our Toronto, the utility brochure and the Solid Waste calendar.
City website (www.toronto.ca/water)	All Phases	Includes useful information such as an on-line map to help property owners identify the by-law date for their property, do-it-yourself instructions, frequently asked questions and a video on the benefits of disconnection.
In-store retailer events	All Phases	Events have taken place during the Do-it-yourself ("DIY") season.

Maximum Potential Downspout Disconnection Rate by Ward (%)

Potential to Disconnect
 Disconnected

