

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM TO INDUSTRY NO. 05-14

DATE: JUNE 30, 2014

TO: DEVELOPERS, CONTRACTORS, ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS,
SURVEYORS AND APPLICANTS

FROM: MAURICE DALY, P.E., DIVISION CHIEF, INFRASTRUCTURE/
RIGHT OF WAY DIVISION, TRANSPORTATION AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES 

SUBJECT: ALLOWANCE OF ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF STORM AND
SUBSOIL WATER DISCHARGE

This memorandum is to provide updated information on the disposal requirements of water discharged from sump pumps, foundation drains and roof drains. This memorandum supersedes all previous memoranda on this subject including those dated April 8, 2004 and June 18, 2004.

Section 5-6-224 of the City Code requires the connection of storm water and ground water discharges, to include roof drains and sump pumps, be directly connected to the City's storm sewer system where available. Discharge to the City's storm sewer system shall met by a connection to an available storm sewer inlet. Availability of a storm sewer inlet is defined by the Code section as within 100 feet of the property line for all one and two family residential properties; and within 500 feet of the property line for all other types of properties. The connection requirement ensures that runoff of this type does not flow directly onto adjacent properties, creating a nuisance and potentially flooding adjacent structures. It also ensures that this runoff does not accumulate in the street and freeze during cold weather periods, thereby creating a safety hazard for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.

On April 13, 2013, City Council adopted an ordinance (ORD. NO. 4800) that amends the requirements of Section 5-6-224 to allow the Director of Transportation and Environmental Services to permit alternative means of disposal when it can be shown to provide an environmental benefit. In each case, the Director will first determine that no nuisance will be created if the storm or ground water is not directly connected to the storm sewer. Additionally, the code has been modified to allow storm water from roof drains only to be discharged directly to the gutter or street at the Director's discretion. This will avoid more costly connections to the storm sewer for roof drains, which only discharge water during rain events when the street and gutter are already wet. However, the Director may decide not to permit discharge directly into the gutter depending on the topography of the street, such as streets that are very flat and subject to ponding and/or freezing, or other site-specific constraints.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please call 703-746-4065.