

FACT SHEET FOR.....

Constant Running Sump Pump? Pg 1

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Why is my sump pump running constantly?

1. The pump may not be working correctly
 - a. Is the discharge hose clogged, loose or broken
 - b. Is the pump the correct size-pumping capacity
 - c. Is the pump in the correct position **and not connected to your floor drain (this is against City Ordinance).**
2. Natural Ground Sources: aka ground water/springs
 - a. There are many reasons for ground water levels changing. When ground water level rises around home, it can cause water to fill the sump hole which will make your pump run more often to prevent your basement from flooding. When the groundwater level or water table decreases, you may find that your pump slows or stops running.
 - b. Ground thaw and saturated ground go hand in hand. When the ground is still frozen below the surface layer and more precipitation is received, then the ground water level can raise because the ground cannot accept any more at this time. As the ground thaws more and precipitation levels decrease, you may find that your pump runs less.
 - c. If you have a spring or other natural ground source near your home, you may experience an increase in your sump pump running. These ground water sources may be short lived (2 days to 2 weeks) or long term (2 weeks to??). Ground water takes the path of least resistance. As it travels underground, it will find the weakest point in the soil to travel, along underground pipes, voids in soil, etc. We do not know how long they will linger or if they will leave at all.

Stormwater
Management
Program

O'Fallon MO

http://www.ofallon.mo.us/dept_swm.htm



To Report Concerns Contact:

Stormwater Department

Phone: 636-240-2000

email: micheleg@ofallon.mo.us

To report illegal dumping or other environmental emergency after business hours, call the Missouri Dept. of Natural Resources at 573-634-2436

To review a copy of the full ordinance:

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

3. Grading and Landscaping:

- a. If there is not sufficient fall away from your foundation natural runoff, irrigation water, etc. will tend to sit against your foundation, seep into the ground and cause your sump pump to run more frequently. We suggest that you verify that you have enough fall or slope away from your house (usually 3-5 ft) that water drains away from your home. Otherwise, the ground water continues to seep, the pump gets it out and it just recycles itself.
- b. Consider extending the sump pump exit at least 3-5 ft from foundation as well to prevent this recycling of ground water.
- c. Landscaping: landscape bed and retaining walls to flatten slope can also cause this cycling effect due to how and where it is placed.

4. Pools:

- a. Installation of a pool whether in-ground or above ground alters any natural drainage patten and final grading usually results in areas being flattened and drainage swales removed so you end up with no slope for the water to drain away or areas that will collect ground water. This can result in increased sump pump activity for the same reasons mention in the Grading and Landscaping Section.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

How can I resolve this issue?

Here are a few suggestions, there many options, however, the City recommends that you consult a professional contractor who specializes in these types of issues for best results to your issue:

1. Check to make sure my pump and hoses are working correctly
2. Check to see that there is enough fall from your foundation to prevent “recycling of groundwater”
3. Verify that your sump discharge is not directly next to foundation. If it is, consider extending 3-5 ft. Make sure you do not extend over your property line.
4. Speak to a professional about alternatives such as:
 - a. Foundation drain or other mechanical mechanism
 - b. Re-grading and adjusting landscape
 - c. Extend connection of sump discharge to drainage swale at rear of property 3-5 ft from property line or connection to a storm drain if near
 - d. Capture discharge and reuse for irrigation of landscape or grass. This is done using a rain barrel or cistern
 - e. If area is saturated, consider installing a rain garden with water loving Missouri native plants. A rain garden is a landscape feature designed to assist with standing water and capturing pollutants.

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