

<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS CIVIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 6, 2018</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>KELLY SCHERR, P.ENG., MBA, FEC MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>WEeping TILE DISCONNECTION PROMOTIONAL CANVASSING CAMPAIGN</b>

**RECOMMENDATION**

That on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Environmental and Engineering Services and City Engineer, the following actions **BE TAKEN** with respect to the weeping tile disconnection promotional door-to-door canvassing campaign:

- (a) The following weeping tile disconnection promotional door-to-door canvassing campaign report **BE RECEIVED** for information;
- (b) The recommended action to promote weeping tile disconnection through door-to-door canvassing with the Growing Naturally Program **BE ENDORSED**.

**PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER**

CWC Report of 2017-12-04, Item 7, Flooding Matters Weeping Tile Connection Charge Feasibility Analysis

**2015-2019 STRATEGIC PLAN**

The 2015 – 2019 Strategic Plan identifies these objectives under Building a Sustainable City: 1B – Managing our infrastructure; 3E – Strong and healthy environment through protection of the natural environment.

**BACKGROUND**

**Purpose**

*Municipal council, at its meeting held on December 12, 2017 resolved:*

*7. That the following actions be taken with respect to the staff report dated December 4, 2017 entitled “Flooding Matters: Weeping Tile Connection Charge Feasibility Analysis”:*

- a) the Managing Director, Environmental and Engineering Services and City Engineer BE DIRECTED to report back, at the February 6, 2018 meeting of the Civic Works Committee, with what steps could be undertaken to implement a public communication campaign targeted at homes with suspected weeping tile connections to the sanitary sewer system; it being understood that the purpose of the campaign would be to inform homeowners, in neighbourhoods upstream of areas historically impacted by basement flooding, of the City’s weeping tile disconnection grant program; and*
- b) the staff report dated December 4, 2017 BE RECEIVED.(2017-E13) (7/1/CWC)*

The purpose of this report is to discuss potential opportunities to promote weeping tile disconnection, including a canvassing campaign to encourage homeowner uptake in the City’s basement flooding grant program.

## Context

The Basement Flooding Grant Program provides subsidies to homeowners to disconnect weeping tiles and protect themselves from basement flooding. Participation in the grant program increased following the intense rainfall events in 2015 and 2016, when a significant number of basement floodings occurred. Since 2008, there have been 365 participants who received funding through the grant program. The program is aimed at reducing the number of homes with weeping tile systems connected to the City's sanitary collection system and provides a subsidy for 90% of eligible costs. The following report will discuss the feasibility of taking a more active approach to promoting the program by providing program information door-to-door in areas that have historically experienced basement flooding.

## DISCUSSION

### Suggested Approach

In order to roll out the door-to-door weeping tile disconnection canvassing campaign program as cost effectively as possible, it is proposed that the program be coordinated with the existing Growing Naturally Outreach Program. The Growing Naturally Program is a public outreach program that includes home visits that provide residents with resources to achieve an environmentally friendly lifestyle. This program allows residents a chance to interact with City staff one-on-one and concludes with a customized report, including pertinent information specific to the home visited. The program utilizes seasonal staff (summer students) who travel to a resident's property, perform an assessment and deliver a reusable tote bag with materials related to City programs.

A suggested approach to promote the basement flooding grant program would include:

- **Growing Naturally Distribution Packages:** Include Basement Flooding Guide Brochure and Basement Flooding Grant Program Brochure in Growing Naturally tote bags for homes in areas that are likely to have weeping tile connections.
- **Growing Naturally Home Visits:** Provide training to Growing Naturally staff so they can provide information regarding the benefits of weeping tile disconnection and the basement flooding grant program.
- **Canvassing of Selected Streets:** The scheduling of Growing Naturally Program home visits will allow time between or after these visits to canvass selected streets to engage homeowners regarding the benefits of weeping tile disconnection from the sanitary sewage system. These selected streets for canvassing will be identified to the Growing Naturally staff by Wastewater Drainage and Engineering staff in various parts of the City, based on the age of home and knowledge of flooding in this area or in a downstream area. When a resident is unavailable, a door hanger will be left.

In coordination with the Growing Naturally Program, it is estimated that canvassing could be completed for between 100 to 300 homes across the City over the months of June – August. As of January 2018, there is currently funding approved for full basement flooding/weeping tile disconnection grants for approximately 150 homes.

### Program Resources Required

The suggested approach will involve the design and production of approximately 300 inserts at a cost of approximately \$1,000, which is available in the existing budget. It will require about 108 hours of staff time over a twelve-week period, but will be utilizing existing Growing Naturally Program staff.

## Program Feasibility Analysis

The Growing Naturally Program and Basement Flooding Grant Program have a shared goal of benefiting both the environment and the community as a whole. Coordinating the weeping tile/basement flooding door-to-door canvassing with the Growing Naturally Program is a cost effective means of delivering details of the Basement Flooding Grant Program. In addition, the proposed program would allow engagement with those residents that may not be effectively reached through other forms of public outreach.

## Other Ongoing Activities

City staff will continue to promote the Basement Flooding Grant Program through its regular public outreach activities. In 2018, the Basement Flooding Grant Program mail inserts will be included in London Hydro and Water bills for postal codes in targeted areas. This mail insert will be developed by Wastewater and Drainage Engineering staff and will promote awareness of the City's Basement Flooding Grant Program.

<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>
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Staff will promote the Basement Flooding Grant Program while recognizing the challenges associated with homeowner uptake. The canvassing initiative will focus on areas where weeping tiles are suspected to be connected, not only where there is flooding concern, and will not stigmatize any particular neighbourhoods. In order to reduce the overall cost of the program, the door-to-door program would be coordinated with the existing Growing Naturally Program home visits.

## Acknowledgements

This report was prepared with the assistance of Marcy McKillop, P.Eng., Environmental Services Engineer, Wastewater and Drainage Engineering, Tom Copeland, P.Eng., Division Manager, Wastewater and Drainage Engineering, Rick Pedlow, C.E.T., Division Manager, Sewer Operations Division, and Aaron Rozentals, P.Eng., Division Manager, Water Engineering Division.

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CC: Marcy McKillop, Tom Copeland, Rick Pedlow, Aaron Rozentals

