

IMPORTANT NOTICE
ABOUT WATER SOFTENER DISCHARGE
ORDINANCE COMPLIANCE REQUIRED

The Village of Pinckney would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation with the following efforts to enforce our ordinance.

By law, the Village of Pinckney is required to monitor levels of a variety of substances at its wastewater treatment plant. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality sets certain standards for these substances with each discharge permit.

The Village of Pinckney continues to exceed its sodium and chloride discharge limits at the wastewater treatment plant. Sodium and chloride levels can be attributed to the use of water softeners, which are often routed to discharge into the sewer line. We have made every effort to notify residents of our Ordinance (#68, Section 8.6), which prohibits discharge of water softeners into the sewer line; however, we continue to struggle with elevated sodium and chloride levels (neither of which can be treated effectively at the plant).

We are now in a position where drastic action must be taken, per the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, to reduce sodium and chloride levels at the source. The Village must demonstrate effective measures to reduce these levels, or risk penalties from MDEQ which could result in higher sewer fees for all users.

Rebate Program

To help correct the problem, Village Council recently approved a rebate program for several solutions to the softener discharge issue. The Village will reimburse 50% of the cost – up to \$300 – of the implementation of any of the following softener discharge methods. ***A receipt for supplies, or from the installer, must be submitted BY JULY 1, 2008 and the project must be inspected by Village of Pinckney Department of Public Works in order to be eligible for this rebate.***

Rebates checks will be issued within 6 weeks of receipt of DPW inspection and approval.

This program is NOT retroactive. Projects completed prior to September 24, 2007 are not eligible for the rebate program.

Disconnecting Your Water Softener Discharge

The following are some options for disconnecting your water softener so it no longer discharges into the sewer:

- A. Run the discharge line to the outside and let the water run onto property. Discharge must be contained on the homeowner's property. This is not a preferred method for several reasons, including the negative effect of softener discharge on plantings and grass. If you are on a well, the discharge must be at least 50 feet from the well site (per Livingston County Health Department).
- B. Install a below-ground infiltration basin (dry-well): Bury a container in the ground, fill it with stone or sand, and run the discharge line to the container. Drill holes in the container to allow the water to seep into the surrounding soil. A sump pump tub, which ranges in size from 15 to 24 inches in diameter to 2 to 4 feet in depth, is an example of a container that could be used. See attached drawing for details.
- C. Convert an existing septic tank: Pump out and clean your existing septic tank, break holes in the bottom of the tank and fill the tank with stone. Disconnect and plug the outlet pipe to the tile field to prevent groundwater from flowing back into the tank.
- D. Install a no-discharge softener system: A new technology is now available that conditions water without using sodium or potassium chloride. These systems condition the water so staining and corrosion are eliminated, do not require salt, and only discharge the iron which is septic-safe. Tank exchange programs are also available (discharge goes into a separate tank, and tank is exchanged monthly or so). Contact your water softener installer for details.

Inspection Required

If you have received this notice, we have no record of a water softener discharge inspection on file. If you have received this notice in error, please contact us. While the rebate program is provided as an added incentive, **all users of the Village of Pinckney sewer system are required to comply with inspection**. If you are not interested in the rebate program – for instance, you do not use a softener – **you still must schedule an inspection** by the Department of Public Works by contacting them at 734-878-0666.

Any property owner on the sewer system that has NOT had a water softener inspection by July 1, 2008 can be fined up to \$500 for each day that he/she remains in violation of Ordinance #68.

Other Cost and Water Savings Recommendations

How old is your softener? Newer, “on-demand” systems can offer significant water and cost savings. These softeners are programmed to cycle only when a certain amount of water is used. Often, the only cost to upgrade is in replacing the timer on the system. Call your water softener company today to see how your softener can be more efficient and less expensive to run.

We continue to offer irrigation meters at a reduced rate of \$210. Installation of these meters ensures that your irrigation water is NOT used in calculating your sewer bill. The meters also offer a way to monitor your outside water use; most lawns need less than 1 inch of water each week to stay green and growing. Contact us for details and order forms, 734-878-6206.

Questions

Please call the Department of Public Works at 734-878-0666 with any questions and to schedule an inspection.

Ordinance #68, Section 8.6

8.6 A separate and independent drywell or similar device that shall adequately handle backwash shall be provided for every water conditioning device and the water conditioning device shall be connected to such drywell or similar device in such a manner as to prevent the discharge of backwash into the Sewage Disposal System. All new residential, commercial or industrial buildings shall also be required to install a separate and independent drywell or similar device that shall be designed and constructed to adequately handle backwash to prevent the discharge of backwash into the Sewage Disposal System even if a water conditioning device is not initially installed. This shall also apply to all residential, commercial, or industrial properties that have been destroyed or demolished and subsequently are being, or have been, rebuilt, remodeled or otherwise restored. A physical inspection and approval of the drywell or similar device and its related plumbing shall be made by the Director or his designee, for all newly constructed, remodeled, rebuilt, or otherwise restored buildings, before water and sewer service is provided by the Village. It shall be the duty of each property owner who owns a building covered by this Section 8.6 to install, maintain, replace, or clean the drywell or similar device at his/her own expense.