Memorandum

To: Carl Caneva, Division Manager/ Staff to The Environment Board

From: David Stoneback, Utilities Director
Lara Biggs, Asst. Supt. – Water & Sewer Division

Subject: Stormwater Management Questions from the Environment Board

Date: May 6, 2010

Lara Biggs will be attending the Board meeting on May 13, 2010. Please see the responses to the questions raised by the Board below.

1. Discuss current Stormwater Codes : Commercial, Residential, and Construction
   Please refer to Title 4 Chapter 24 of the City Code (available on the City’s web site) to review the City’s stormwater requirements.

2. How do Evanston’s codes compare to other municipalities’ including Chicago’s?
   At this time, we are unsure how Evanston’s code compares to other municipalities. However, the MWRD has been assigned the authority to develop a watershed management ordinance for all of Cook County. As such, this ordinance will create similarities throughout all the communities in Cook County. The draft ordinance is available at the MWRD website. Select the Services & Facilities link on the banner and then stormwater management from the pull down list.

3. Identify current concerns with the Stormwater codes
   The code was passed in 2007 – prior to that there was just a policy. The code does not address construction site runoff control, and the EPA has stated we need to include this for all developments within City. Staff is currently developing this policy.

4. Are there opportunities for improvements vis a vis sustainability?
   Yes, there are always opportunities for improvements in regards to sustainability. Our efforts have mostly been done by encouraging residents to use rain barrels and to avoid direct connection of downspouts and sump pump discharges to the sewer system.

5. Are there best practices, model codes recommended?
   We believe that the Cook County Watershed Management Ordinance will include these best practices.
6. Where does information about alternative practices come from?
   From brochures available from the Water & Sewer Division, the Ecology Center, Streets & Sanitation and the MWRD.

7. Is it more beneficial to have lawn debris picked up and placed in a bag for disposal or to sweep it into the street for the street sweeper?
   To keep the sewer system clean, it is our preference that the lawn debris be bagged for disposal.

8. How often are storm drains grates cleaned out?
   The drainage structures (grate & sump) are cleaned once every three years by the sewer division. The cleaning of the drainage structure grates (at the street level) varies based on the street sweeping schedule for a given block. The City’s street sweeping schedule is posted on the City’s website.

9. Is there a charge for the stormwater going into the system?
   No, the City investigated a charge based on impervious surface area but elected not to follow this course.

10. Does there exist any information from the City to property owners regarding averting water or systems that help drain water away from a building?
    Not that we are aware of.

11. Are all of Evanston’s stormwater systems MS4, or are there some combined systems?
    Evanston is primarily a combined sewer system, and as such much of the storm water is conveyed via the combined sewer system or the relief combined sewer system. These systems discharge to the MWRD interceptor, then to the deep tunnel. If the valve to the deep tunnel is closed and the hydraulic grade raises high enough a combined sewer overflow to the channel would occur. Evanston has an MS4 permit for the storm sewer systems.

12. Have there been trends of increases in stormwater discharge volume and peak flow as a result of conversion to impervious surfaces due to condo developments in recent years? Have there been increased incidents of sewage overflow if there are combined systems?
    Evanston does not measure stormwater discharge volume and / or peak flow in the storm sewer system. However, it is our opinion that the condo developments have not increased the volume of storm water discharge to either the storm or combined sewer systems since the newer developments were required to install detention systems whereas the previous property generally had the same amount of impervious area, but did not have any detention systems.

13. Are there city regulations regarding cover features for idle construction lots?
    Yes, Community Development has a regulation for this and enforces it.
    Does EPA general construction permit allow for discharge when a project is stalled?
    Yes, but the system must be maintained.

14. Does the EPA monitor trace metal and organic pollutants in stormwater?
    To our knowledge the EPA does not monitor this in Evanston.
15. How are pollutants removed from stormwater systems?
   In general pollutants are not removed from the storm water. Only on the
   Colfax/Bryant storm sewer system was a structure with a sump installed along
   with an anti-siphon device to gather heavy debris and stop floatables from
   discharging to the channel.

16. Are there systems in place to effectively detect or prevent non-stormwater
    discharge?
   In accordance with the City’s MS4 permit, all storm sewer outfalls are inspected
   annually for improper discharge. Additionally signs are posted by the storm
   water outfalls to the channel requesting anyone observing improper discharge to
   contact the Water & Sewer Division.