CITY OF GRASS VALLEY
MEMORANDUM FOR
CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF APRIL 8, 2008
Prepared on March 28, 2008

TO: Members of the City Council
VIA: Daniel C. Holler, City Administrator
FROM: Timothy M. Kiser, PE, Public Works Director/City Engineer
SUBJECT: Second Reading - Building and Service Sewer Municipal Code

RECOMMENDATION: By motion, waive the reading in its entirety and read by title only (requires a unanimous voice vote) and adopt Ordinance No. ____ to amend Municipal Code Section 13.12.050, “Building and Service Sewers - Connections,” to update the requirements for the installation of backflow and flow relief devices.

BACKGROUND: On March 25, 2008 the Council conducted a public hearing and held the first reading of an ordinance to amend Municipal Code Section 13.12.050, “Building and Service Sewers - Connections.” The current Section of the Public Services Chapter of the Municipal Code was written in December of 1992, defining the sewer service connection from the building to the Public Sewer. The need for the installation of backflow protection was identified and was based on reverse sewer flow potential, which was the standard practice at that time.

Over the last few years, local agencies have been instituting more universal approaches and proactive solutions to avoid or limit potential backflow or overflow incidents. The California Water Quality Control Board (CWQCB) established ORDER NO. 2006-0003-DWQ requiring all Publicly Owned Sewer agencies to take action to prevent sanitary sewer overflows, which includes sewage backing up into buildings and homes. With the potential of health hazards, property damage, and an increased liability, City staff is proposing a proactive and simple solution to this potentially serious problem for municipal sewer costumers. Staff is proposing the following modifications:

1. Installation of a relief device (pop-off cap) in private sewer cleanouts in an area least likely to cause property damage and provide containment options. For most properties, this device would be located in a sewer cleanout at the property line.

2. Requiring the installation of backwater valves in all new construction, at change of property title, on remodels involving additional plumbing fixtures or if 25% of the structural area is being remodel, and buildings where the elevation of the any floor is less than 12” above the ground surface of the nearest upstream manhole. Currently, backwater valves are only required in specific situations.

The installation of backflow prevention and relief devices will require a City permit and inspection by City staff.

The new Ordinance shall become effective July 1, 2008 for all new construction. Existing construction shall be required to come into compliance September 1, 2008 based on property title change or property improvements as outlined within the ordinance.

FISCAL IMPACT: Costs of administering the program/permits will be recovered through the City’s Fee schedule, and thus no fiscal impact to the City.

Attachment: Proposed Ordinance

cc: Joe Heckel, Community Services Director
    Rick Beckley, Deputy Public Works Director - Water/Wastewater
ORDINANCE NO.______

AN ORDINANCE OF THE GRASS VALLEY CITY COUNCIL AMENDING
CHAPTER 13.12.050 OF THE GRASS VALLEY MUNICIPAL CODE TO
INCLUDE AN EXPANDED BACKFLOW PREVENTION ELEMENT

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRASS VALLEY AS
FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 13.12.050 of Chapter 13 of the Grass Valley Municipal Code is
amended to read as follows:

A. No work shall be undertaken on any building sewer, service sewer, or connection
until a sewer connection permit has been first obtained from the building
department on a form approved by the Public Works Director/City Engineer or his
designated representative. The permit application shall be supplemented by plans,
specifications, and other information indicating the type and location of the
proposed sewer connection or work for public works approval. A fee for such
permit shall be established by resolution of the City Council. All new sewer
services or connections shall be inspected and approved by the Director of Public
Works/City Engineer or his designated representative, before new sewer services
or connections are completed. The Public Works Director/City Engineer or his
designated representative shall notify the Finance Director of the date a property is
provided with sewer service.

B. The service sewers from the public sewer to the property line shall be installed at
the time the sewer is constructed whenever practicable. The connection of service
lines to trunk lines shall be prohibited except when specifically approved by the
Public Works Director/City Engineer or his designated representative.

C. If the city has a sewer impact fee, this also shall be paid at the time of obtaining the
permit.

D. A cleanout shall be placed in every building sewer at its junction with the soil pipe
of the building, at the property line and at such other locations as may be
determined by the Public Works Director/City Engineer or his designated
representative. It shall be made with an approved type of cleanout fitting. The
cleanout shall be extended to above finish grade, except that in paved areas it
shall be extended to finish grade or boxed and covered with a cover plate. A relief
device shall be installed in the cap of the cleanout located in an area least likely to
cause damage to property or contamination if activated.
E. An approved type backwater valve shall be required:
   a. In all new construction and service sewer replacements.
   b. Where existing buildings have plumbing drain outlets at an elevation that is 12” or less above the ground surface of the next upstream manhole.
   c. At change of property title.
   d. At the time of issuance of all Building permits, residential building reports, revocable licenses and other building related permits.
   e. On remodels where plumbing fixtures are added to the property and/or more than twenty five percent of the structure area is being remodeled.
   f. When any replacement or repair is being made to the sanitary sewer lateral.
   g. When property has been damaged by the blockage of the City sanitary sewer main or the private lateral.
   h. On all structures where a pump is used to lift sewage to the sanitary sewer system main line. The backflow relief device shall be located to protect the structure from damage in the event that the pump is pumping against a closed backflow device.
   i. In buildings where the elevation of any floor is at or below the invert of the City sanitary sewer main, or is less than 12” above the ground surface of the next upstream manhole, or where a condition exists where a plug in the City sanitary sewer main will cause the hydraulic gradient to rise above the lowest floor level.

F. The cost of installation and the responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the building service sewer and its fittings/devices shall be the property owner’s.

G. Failure of the property owner to install a backwater valve for or as a result of any of the above conditions shall relieve the City of any and all responsibilities for any subsequent damage caused by backflow of the sanitary sewer.

H. Property owners are responsible for the proper installation and maintenance of building and service lateral sewers and cleanouts, and for obtaining the necessary construction and encroachment permits.

I. Property owners are responsible for keeping the three foot radius of the cleanout area clear of vegetation or any obstruction to visibility or ease of access.

J. The materials and methods of construction of building sewers shall be as required by the city plumbing code, except as specified in subsections D and E of this section.
K. The initial connection of a sewer service from the public sewer to the property shall be charged to the applicant at the published Fully Burdened Rates for labor and supervision, overhead and equipment rent. The charge for same shall be due and payable as soon as the work is completed and shall be deemed delinquent at the same time and in the same manner as the next regular sewer bill. (Prior code § 20-5)

SECTION 2. SEVERABILITY

If any section of this Ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect any other section or application of this Ordinance which can be given effect without the invalid or unconstitutional provision or application and to this end the provisions of this Ordinance are severable.

SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Ordinance shall become effective for new construction on July 1, 2008. All other identified conditions requiring cleanout relief devices (pop off valve) and backwater valves, including title change or property improvements, shall become effective September 1, 2008.

INTRODUCED and first read at a regular meeting of the City Council on the 25th day of March, 2008.

FINAL PASSAGE AND ADOPTION by the City Council of the City of Grass Valley was at a meeting thereof held on the ___ day of __________, 2008, by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

________________________
Mark Johnson, Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM: ATTEST:

__________________________
__________________________
Ruthann G. Ziegler, City Attorney Kristi K. Bashor, City Clerk