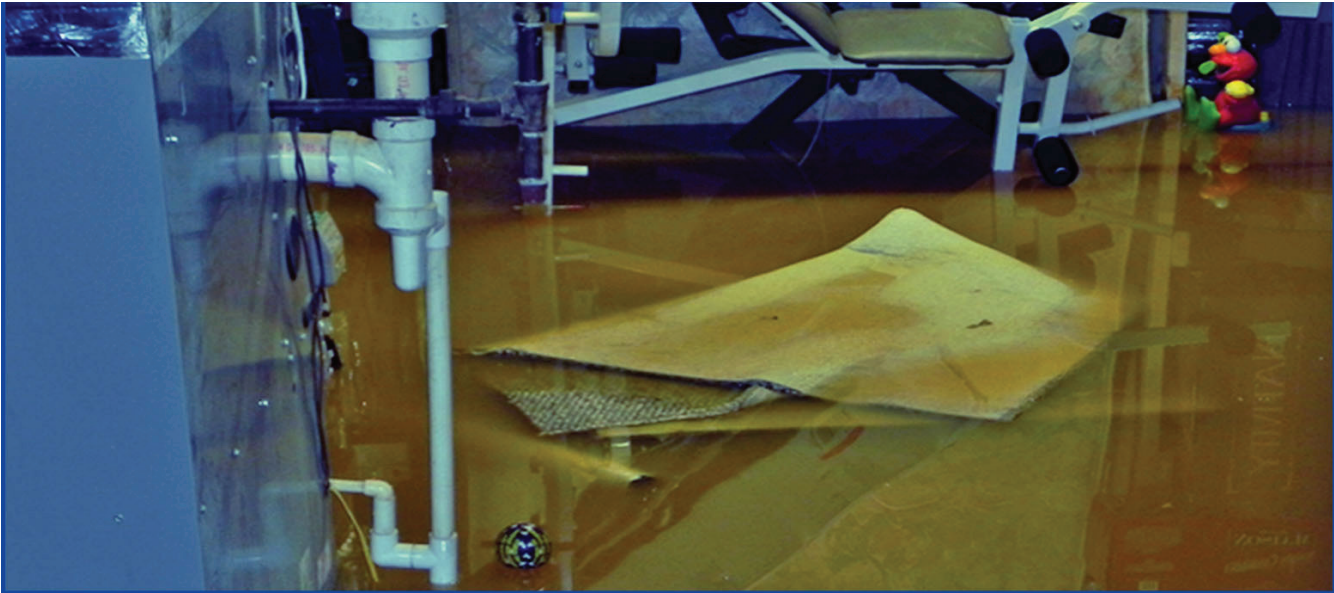


Program Addresses Drainage Defects in Newer Homes



Drainage problems can cause indoor flooding, especially in basements.

Effective October 2020, DPIE has enhanced its process to address drainage complaints from owners of homes that are five years old or less and whose fine grading permits are still open. The Drainage Defects Complaint Program, which was implemented in October 2020, created enhanced enforcement options to hold builders, developers and engineers associated with new home construction accountable for mistakes related to construction and grading that affect drainage from storm water.

The enhancements were spurred by legislation proposed by Maryland State Senator Susie Proctor in response to complaints about drainage issues in new home communities. The program requires DPIE to establish a process for homeowners to request an evaluation of a defect; provide a written analysis of any defects seen during an inspection; and to collect data on home builders who have constructed homes where defects were identified.

DPIE Associate Director Mary Giles, who supervises the [Site/Road Plan Review Division](#), said frequent complaints in new homes include excessive storm water flow in the back yard and wet basements. Drainage issues are among the most frequent complaints received by DPIE staff.

The enhanced process includes [a special drainage complaint form](#) on which residents file their complaint and provide basic information. It defines qualifying homes as those that were built less than five years ago and for which the site development fine grading permit has not been closed. Other homeowners with drainage complaints should file them with 311.

“Our goal is to effectuate a solution before the permit is closed to get the builder to come back and address the problem if it was created by something done by the builder,” Giles said.

Recently, DPIE, the Department of the Environment (DoE), the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) and the Prince George’s Soil Conservation District (PGSCD) collaborated on a comprehensive study of drainage issues. Their findings were compiled in a report entitled [Drainage and Flooding in Prince George’s County](#), which can be accessed on the [DPIE website](#). The report explains which County agencies investigate different drainage complaints.

For more information about the Drainage Defects Complaint Program, call 301-636-2060.