

From: Gudrun Masschelein [REDACTED]
Date: July 24, 2024 at 8:05:17 PM EDT
To: Colin Grantham <cgrantham@strathroy-caradoc.ca>
Cc: Gudrun Masschelein [REDACTED]
Subject: Water Leak on 593 Darcy Dr. Strathroy

Hello Colin,

further to our most recent discussion and the reference to the attached statement emailed to you on September 15, 2023, please be advised that we are asking \$20 000.

We would appreciate if you could address this matter at your earliest convenience and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best,
John Masschelein

Water Issues in 2022

In early June of 2022, during a drought, we noticed a large quantity of water flooding our backyard. We did our best to figure out the source and noticed that the water was coming into the basement in large volume, and was being pumped out into our backyard by the sump pump. Within a couple of weeks, we had a swamp in the yard and were no longer able to step on the lawn without water getting into our shoes.

The sump pump was activated every ninety seconds with fourteen hundred liters of water being pumped out of the basement daily. Two men from the PUC tested the water for chlorine and as no chlorine was found in the water, we were told that it was not town water but rather a private issue that was our responsibility to fix.

We dug up around the house. In doing so, we ruined our professionally done landscaping. We put in and extended drainage tiles, put in a catch basin so the water can flow to the storm sewer and yet more tiles to reroute water from the eavestroughs. We put in our own swale on the north and south side of the property using plastic, landscape fibre and river stones with border to connect the eavestroughs into the swale, digging across the lawn, putting drainage pipes in.

In 2020 we had a decorative retaining wall built as part of our landscaping, that due to the water saturation sunk by two rows of cement building blocks. Fence posts have rotted, a well.

We were referred to Walter and he suggested draining the water to the front of the property. We were told that the house was built too low and the eavestrough water was going into the footing tile and circling out at the sump pump.

We moved many yards of soil from the swale we built to build up the outside of our home, rerouted and extended the eavestrough exits into the swale and filled with river stones and an extra second catch basin 5x5x4 'deep.

We were puzzled as the problem only got worse and we called the town once again. Two men from PUC came out promptly, tested the water in the sump hole again and found no chlorine. It was our problem and we should have never purchased the house as there was a backup pump installed in case of power outage. We spent a lot of time in the furnace room prior to our purchase in June of 2019 and although a wet spring, the pump never activated. We also had two men from the roads department checking our backyard. They had no solution for us, but told us that the water issue was ours. They said that there is a pool on both sides of our home, where the water could be coming from or from a neighbour's sump pump. We contacted our neighbours and they had absolutely no issues and dry sump pumps. At this point, Walter from the drainage department was getting quite annoyed by our (John's) constant phone calls and repeatedly said the problem was personal and ours, not the town's and to make sure not to drain across the fence to the vacant green space property, even though our backyard was saturated with water. We had put two rolls of tile, eight yards of top soil, several yards of river stone and labour from

ourselves, our son and daughter in law, two neighbours and a friend to fix "our" problem. Walter was told that he did not have to answer John's calls any more ...

We were unable to go on vacation that summer, as the sump pump was going off continually and we were worried that the motor might eventually burn out. The secondary system would not have been able to keep up with the water coming in. Having to listen to the sump pump going off and the pounding sound of the water hammer in the pipes every minute of the day and night, was very hard on our health.

Walter from the PUC told us to check the sump pump lines and make sure it is not returning to the basement sump pump, causing the water to circulate, which we spent three days digging up once again around the side of the house and found everything to be in order.

In November of 2022 we noticed water bubbling up in the boulevard of our laneway.

When John called Walter, he did not have time to come out that day to look at it and did not take it seriously, but wanted to know where the water was coming out at the sump pump, being adamant again that it was our problem. John became very frustrated and called our councillor and the mayor's office. Walter and other PUC workers showed up shortly thereafter, dug up our laneway and realized that the water leak was on towns property. The leak was fixed on a Friday, on Sunday Gudrun had to take John in to Emergency at Strathroy Hospital as he thought he was having a stroke. Months and months of frustration, stress, and lack of help to solve the problem took a toll on his health. On Monday following the repair, we had a meeting scheduled with the mayor, that Gudrun had to cancel, because John was not well.