



E.H. Marchant Moves Away from Wet Sewer Ejector Basin Systems

PCA signatory E.H. Marchant is increasingly turning to OverWatch inline sewage pumps when they run into problems with traditional wet well ejector basin systems. These pumps eliminate the need for large sewage pits inside buildings and replace them with a dry-pit configuration that uses the existing piping as retention.

Unlike a conventional ejector setup that relies on a pit and float system, OverWatch pumps are installed inline. When the main sewer backs up, a sensor signals the pump to cycle, moving wastewater without the need to store hundreds of gallons of raw sewage inside the building. While the technology has been around for several years, it only received full product acceptance roughly two years ago.

“With no standing sewage, there is significantly less odor, fewer pest issues, and far less ongoing maintenance,” said John Fitzgerald, a Project Manager at E.H. Marchant. “You’re eliminating a whole mess of problems that come with wet pits.”

Some common issues with traditional pumps include cockroaches, grease buildup, and float failures. E.H. Marchant often gets service calls when existing ejector pits are clogged or failing and become a source of nasty sewage smells entering occupied buildings. The newer pumps use chopper blades to cut up debris, and the pump heads can be swapped out easily if service is required.

E.H. Marchant has installed these systems for a growing list of institutional and commercial clients, including Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston College, Chelsea Police, and Merrimack College, among others. In each case, the goal is the same: get raw sewage out of the building and improve long-term reliability.

The retrofit process is straightforward but requires careful coordination. Crews empty and clean the existing wet pit, pump it down, plug the main, and tie in the new system. This is often done overnight to avoid disrupting operations or exposing occupants to odors. While some installations can be tricky, especially where multiple interceptors for sanitary and grease lines affect pipe pitch, Marchant's team of Local 12 plumbers have it down pat. Most installations are completed in under 16 hours. Foreman Jim Sullivan has led the work on the majority of these jobs for E. H. Marchant and has become their in-house expert on these pumps.

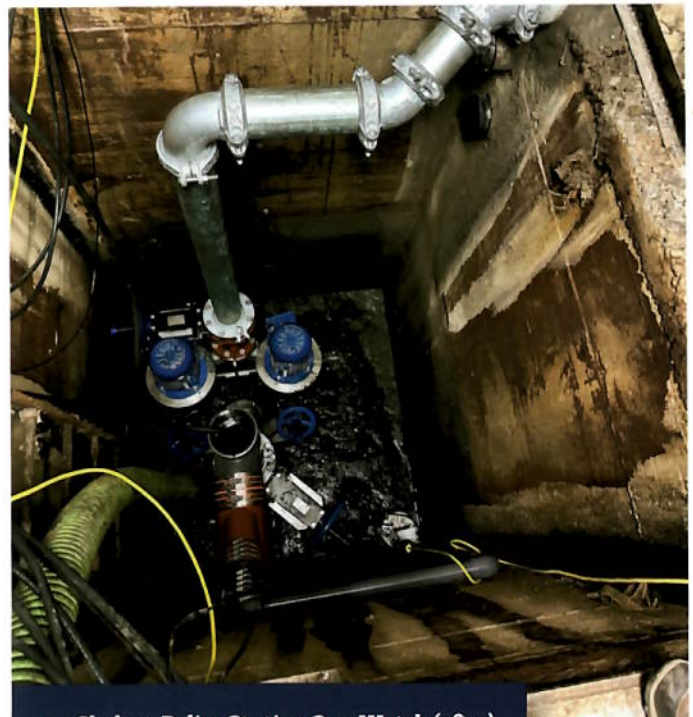
Marchant has also been rethinking their pump installations in new construction as well. In restaurant settings, grease that slips past interceptors can coat and weigh down float switches in traditional pits. This leads to failures and causes overflows, which Fitzgerald has noticed in multiple Seaport restaurants. By doing it the new way, they can remove floats from the equation and eliminate that risk.

There is a fiscal consideration, however, as the newer systems cost two to three times more than a conventional ejector pit. The long-term benefits, though, outweigh the upfront expense.

As more owners and engineers look for dependable, low-maintenance solutions, E.H. Marchant expects inline sewage pump systems to become far more common across the industry.



^ Chelsea Police Station OverWatch (before)



^ Chelsea Police Station OverWatch (after)