

# Backup Sump Pumps:

## Water powered vs. Battery powered. Which one is the “Green” choice for today?

Every now and then someone comes along with an opinion about protecting the environment, preserving the green space, etc. In the course of this type of discussion, it often is explained that water is precious and should not be wasted, and this is true. It is also true that a water powered sump pump uses some water during its run cycles, but this is a non-polluted discharge of ground water into the ground water collection system. What I am saying is this: the sump water that is removed is not like the sewage water discharged to the sewage treatment plant where it has to be cleaned, disinfected, and returned into the water supply. No, this is the same waste water that comes down from the sky in the form of precipitation. Nearly every populated area in North America prevents this water from being discharged into the sewage system. It must be discharged into the Storm Drainage System instead, where it goes right back into the water supply and is “cleaned up” by nature’s operation of filtration, etc.

Nothing is contaminated or polluted by this operation in any way. However, this is often greatly exaggerated during one of these proposals to advance someone’s own agenda, and is often far from the actual truth. So we want to give you our opinion about water powered sump pumps vs. battery powered sump pumps as used for backing up the main sump pump in residential and commercial properties. Because we sell both types of sump pump systems, it is natural for us to be the target of such opinions. But let’s look at the real facts.

A backup sump pump is a needed item and so it’s one or the other, battery or water powered, period. There are no other choices at this time. People will often say they have or can get a generator. Well what about a sump pump burnout? The generator does no good at that time. And unless you have a very expensive automatic generator, you have to be there to run it. They are dangerous and difficult to run properly and still are only useful during a power failure, not a pump failure. Keep in mind that some day that generator will no longer work and will be disposed of into a landfill. A water powered backup sump pump rarely operates, so it is off most of the time and uses no water or energy at all during this “off” time. A battery powered pump continues to use electricity whether it is in use or not. The battery needs constant attention and re-charging regardless of whether or not the pump runs.

A water powered pump produces no waste of any kind, toxic or otherwise during its use or non-use periods. A battery powered backup sump pump produces several types of waste products at all times. Even though batteries are recycled, they are not 100% recycled. There are toxic waste byproducts disposed of when batteries are manufactured. Although battery manufacturers are extremely conscious of these waste products and do their best to reduce these to a minimum, there is still some toxic waste produced. And even when batteries are recycled, there is toxic waste produced in the re-manufacture of old batteries into new batteries. Toxic waste includes mercury, lead, nickel, magnesium, plastics, and other metals, etc. And this assumes that everyone recycles those old used batteries. In many cases, they are simply left to rot in the basement or hidden in the trash and dumped into a landfill.

Let’s talk about batteries in the basement of occupied homes. Batteries emit small amounts of toxic gas into the home while they are being used and charged. Granted this is a small amount and hardly noticeable, it still remains that this is toxic waste. A water powered pump emits no waste at all, toxic or otherwise.

A water powered backup sump pump is certainly the “green” choice for today. Once installed, it lasts many years requiring little or no maintenance, wastes nothing, emits nothing, and protects basements from water damage that otherwise would cause other types of waste, like ruined furniture, soaked rugs, damaged furnaces, and other appliances.

Jim Belle  
Base Products Corporation

## How much does the Basepump backup sump pump cost to operate?

**3 Gallons/Day..... \$4.00/Year** (assuming one day of average use, over a one year period)\*

### Typical Water Usage:\*\*American Family of 4 Uses Average Gallons per Day

⇒ Average Home Uses.....	200+/-
⇒ Toilet.....	70
⇒ Shower/Bathtub.....	120
⇒ Brushing your teeth.....	20
⇒ Dishwasher.....	15
⇒ Water Leaks/accidental use.....	16

**Basepump RB750.....3**

### Facts.....Water vs. battery backup sump pumps

- ⇒ Battery backups have limited pumping time. At most 6-8 hours of running time, maybe 12 with extra batteries. Basepump will operate for an indefinite period of time, if necessary.
- ⇒ There is maintenance required on most batteries. The water level must be monitored as well as the charger.
- ⇒ Batteries are heavy, hard to handle, and difficult to dispose of when they finally do quit (and they will).
- ⇒ Batteries must be replaced every 3-7 years, depending on the type of battery.
- ⇒ Battery backup pumps are often difficult to install and are connected to the main sump pump pipe under water, subject to corrosion, deposit build-up, and clogging.
- ⇒ There are complicated lights, alarms, chargers, battery levels, push buttons, etc.
- ⇒ Basepump uses water only when it operates and it does not actually consume, change, or contaminate water.

**Testimony.....** Re: Western NY Storm of Friday, October 12-13, 2006:

*It is difficult to put words to my total satisfaction with your water powered pump (Basepump). Our area was hit with over 24 inches of snow overnight which blew so forcefully that we could not see across the street and as most trees still had their leaves on, the accumulated snow plus the severe wind broke branches and in some cases toppled whole trees; in fact, it sounded like a war zone all night with trees snapping and breaking apart. We had over 400,000 homes and businesses that lost electric, etc.*

*Within short order the power companies brought in over 2,000 crews from all over New York State and from as far away as Tennessee. Additionally, a like number of crews came and removed branches, etc. to allow the electrical people to get in to reconnect the wires.*

*Back to the sump pump: We were without power for a week from 8:30 PM Oct 12 to 7:30 PM Oct 19 (take note we have a spring which fills our sump quickly in these kinds of weather conditions). Our water powered Basepump ran every two minutes for 167 hours or 5010 cycles, without fail.*

*Pat yourselves on the back, people. That is great engineering and super quality. Thanks.*

*William P., Homeowner  
Williamsville, New York*

**This satisfied customer, if he would have had a battery back up pump, would have used (23) batteries to keep his basement from flooding. Many people during this power failure were unable to get gasoline for their portable generators because most nearby gas stations were also without power for their pumps**

\* Basepump removes 2 gallons of sump water for every gallon of potable water. Example: Assume the pump operates one complete 24 hour period per year, once every 5 minutes for 30 seconds each time. The Basepump Model RB750 uses 3.5 gallons of potable water per cycle; times 12 cycles/hour times 24 hours/day equals 1,008 Gallons/day. Assuming water rates of \$4.00 per thousand gallons... times 1,008 gallons.....equals \$4.00 per day. Put that up against the loss that was prevented and this costs nothing at all.

\*\* As published by the Plumbing, Heating, Cooling Contractors Association, [www.phccweb.com](http://www.phccweb.com)