

AVOIDING SEWER BACK-UPS

Sewer back-ups are a frustrating experience for property owners. In our District, as in other municipalities, the property owner is responsible for maintenance of the lateral sewer line from their property to the sewer main. The District is responsible for maintaining the main sewer line only.

Sewer lines become blocked due to build-up or debris in the pipes that becomes trapped and results in a back up. When this occurs, wastewater from the home or business is blocked from flowing into the main and flows backwards – through the first available plumbing appliance outlet. A large deluge of rain or flood waters may also cause back-ups when the main lines become overwhelmed with runoff.

The District will respond to and investigate all sewer back-ups. If there is a problem with the main line, the District will make sure the problem is addressed and repaired as soon as possible. However, if the problem is within the house sewer line, the property owner will be informed and advised to call a licensed plumber.

The property owner should make sure that all the water use in the house is turned off when experiencing a back-up. If flooding does not cease in a short period of time, **DO NOT OPEN THE CAPS** of your building's main trap nor allow a plumber to do so. Call the District immediately and District personnel will respond within fifteen to twenty minutes during normal office hours and approximately one hour during off hours. Opening a house trap cap prior to an examination by District personnel may exacerbate the problem.

When a plumber is called, let the plumber know if you have any large trees over your house sewer line and any history of sanitary sewer problems.

Methods to Prevent Sewer Back-Ups

Don't plant trees or large shrubs near sewer lines

Slow drain lines should be cleared to increase drainage from the property into the main.

Don't dispose of grease and fats down the drain, but in the trash.

Don't dispose of diapers or other disposable hygiene products in your toilets, but in the trash.

Don't dispose of bones and food scraps down your sink unless you have an appliance to grind them before disposal.

Don't connect backyard drains, sump pumps and other flood control systems to the sanitary sewer. Consult a licensed plumber to undo any illegal connections.

Consider purchasing a back-flow valve (preventor) into your sewer system. A properly installed valve can significantly reduce the likelihood of wastewater entering your property.