

# HELP US PREVENT SEWER BACKUPS

## CAUSES

The disposal of any item, other than human waste and toilet paper, into the sanitary sewer system can cause a backup.

### “FLUSHABLE” PRODUCTS

Just because it’s advertised as “flushable” doesn’t mean it actually is. Avoid flushing “flushable” wipes, paper towels, dental floss, diapers, wrappers and feminine hygiene products.

### FAT, OIL & GREASE (FOG)

Examples include dairy, sauces, soups & cooking grease poured down the drain. FOG hardens and sticks to the inside of sewer pipes, partially or completely blocking flow, resulting in a backup.

### STORMWATER (RAINWATER)

Can enter the sewer system through uncovered or damaged cleanouts, cracked or broken sewer pipes, or basement sump pumps. Can overwhelm the capacity of the system and cause widespread backups.

### TREE ROOTS

Often grow into private and public sewer lines obstructing flow. The roots trap paper products and solids, leading to backups.

## EFFECTS

When a backup occurs, it’s enormously unpleasant, causes damage to property, is harmful to the environment and exposes those nearby to disease-causing micro-organisms. Homeowners are responsible for clearing any blockage in the private sewer line between their home and the city main. In most cases, the homeowner is responsible for the cleanup and property damage.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO

## SEWER BACKUPS ARE PREVENTABLE

Reduce your risk by being mindful of what you flush.

Dry wipe plates, pots, pans and dishes into the trash before washing.

Pour all liquid oil and grease into a sealable container and dispose of it in the trash.

Have your sewer line checked periodically for tree roots, and check the cap on your cleanout.

Make sure your basement sump pump isn’t connected to the sanitary sewer.



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Report sewer backups to:  
785-587-4530 (8-5 M-F)  
785-587-4555 (after hours)