

MODEL SANITARY SEWER ARTICLE FOR CITY NEWLETTER

The City of _____ (*insert name of city*) Public Works Department provides for the operation, maintenance, and treatment of wastewater to an environmentally safe level for returning the water back to the ecological system.

_____ (*insert name of city*) has _____ (*insert number of miles*) miles of sanitary sewer mains. Each year about _____ (*insert amount, e.g. one-third*) of the City's sanitary sewer mains are inspected and cleaned. Mains requiring a higher level of maintenance are cleaned annually or semi-annually. This routine maintenance helps to prevent blockages and sewer backups.

As a resident, you can play a key role in preventing sanitary sewer backups. To help prevent backups, please dispose of the following items properly, not by dumping in a drain or flushing down the toilet:

- Diapers
- Sanitary napkins
- Rags or shop towels
- Garage waste products such as oil, grease, gasoline, antifreeze
- Household waste such as ashes, grease, corrosives, glass, metals, paint, poisons, or solvents
- Yard waste such as sand, soil, or mud

Inflow and infiltration (I&I) is also a potential cause of sewer backups. I&I refers to clear water getting into the sanitary sewer system. This might occur through cracks or leaks in sewer pipes and manholes or from sump pumps incorrectly connected to the sanitary sewer system. Particularly during large rain events, I&I can cause the sanitary sewer system to overflow resulting in sewer backups.

Because of the potential for I&I to create system issues, City ordinance prohibits property owners from disposing of clear water into the sanitary sewer system. This includes water from any roof, surface or ground sump pump, foundation drain, or swimming pool. Sanitary sewer problems should be reported to the City of _____'s (*insert name of city*) Public Works Department. The City will work with you to identify the cause of the problem. If there is a blockage in one of the City's main sewer lines, the City will attempt to clear the blockage.

The sewer line from your home, business or other property to the City sewer main is your responsibility. **That means that you as the property owner are responsible for clearing any blockages.** Property owners must schedule service and pay the cost of clearing any blockage located in the individual sewer line on their property.

If you have questions regarding the City's sanitary sewer maintenance program, sewer backup response or a specific incident, please contact the Public Works Department at (____) ____ - _____ (*insert phone number*), Monday through Friday, ____ AM to ____ PM. Outside regular business hours, emergencies can be reported to the _____ (*insert secondary information, e.g. sheriff's office*) at (____) ____ - _____ (*insert phone number*).