

City Sewer System Jet Flushing Information and Pointers

Keep Your toilet bowl lid down during cleaning:

The sanitary sewer lines are cleaned (also referred to as Jetting) using high performance sewer cleaning equipment. A cleaning nozzle is propelled from one manhole to the next using water under high pressure. The nozzle is then pulled back to the starting manhole. As the nozzle is pulled back, water scours the inside of the sanitary sewer pipe. Any debris in the pipe is pulled back with the water. The debris is removed from the manhole with a vacuum unit. If roots are found, they are cut with a root cutter. This process is repeated on every sewer line cleaned. Sewer lines requiring a higher level of maintenance are cleaned annually or semi-annually. The sanitary lift stations are checked weekly and include wireless monitoring and alarm equipment for flows, backups and power outages. This routine maintenance helps to prevent future blockages and back-ups and keeps our main sewer lines flowing consistently.

What to expect if you live in the cleaning area:

A sanitary sewer jet-cleaning machine uses high-pressure water to clean the sanitary sewer. This high-water pressure may affect your home's sanitary sewer plumbing. You may experience gurgling or bubbling water in the toilet bowl, sinks, or floor drains, and in some rare cases, splashing out of the bowl. The water that could come from this type of incident is from the bowl or P-trap itself. The common causes of air venting into homes during sanitary sewer cleaning are: air movement from normal cleaning operations, cleaning sanitary sewer lines that have a steep slope, sewer lines running close to the building, a plugged roof vent, and the size and complexity of the home's waster and ventilation system. **So, to minimize water splashing out of your toilet bowl, make it a habit to keep the lid down.** You may smell sewer gas from your drains. If this does occur, flush your toilet and pour water into your drains. Sanitary sewer cleaning does not damage your sewer system. The water that comes out is the water that is normally in the home's system (drain traps), **not** the water from the sanitary sewer in the street.

What homeowners can do to help:

The sanitary sewer system begins with the plumbing fixtures inside your house. All of the drains from the sinks, tubs, showers and toilets are piped to the sewer service that exits your house and connects to the sewer main under the street. Each drain has a "trap" and a vent pipe that prevent sewer gases and odors from entering the house.

-Some basic trouble-shooting might help you when a drain backs up. If only one section of plumbing or fixture doesn't drain, it is usually a problem within the house. However, if no drains work, or the entire system drains slowly, or in worse cases- waste water comes back up through the drain, the problem is probably outside of the house in the sewer service of the sewer main.

You can reduce potential problems by following some simple rules:

- If you smell sewage but have no obvious problems, add a gallon of water to your drains and plumbing fixtures to insure your traps have water.
- Never flush disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, applicators, wet-wipes, rags or other objects that might block or settle in your pipes.
- Please do not dump gas, grease, oil, antifreeze, paint or other foreign objects down drains
- If using a garbage disposal, minimize amount of food and never dispose of cooking oils, greases or coffee grounds.
- Take immediate action if you suspect your sewer line is partially plugged

Sewer Repairs:

The property owner is responsible for any cleaning on the service line from the home, to and including the connection at the sewer main line. All repairs or replacements of failed lines from the home to the property line are the responsibility of the property owner.

Inflow and Infiltration (I & I):

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 connected to the sanitary sewer system rather than the storm 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, ordinances prohibit 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.

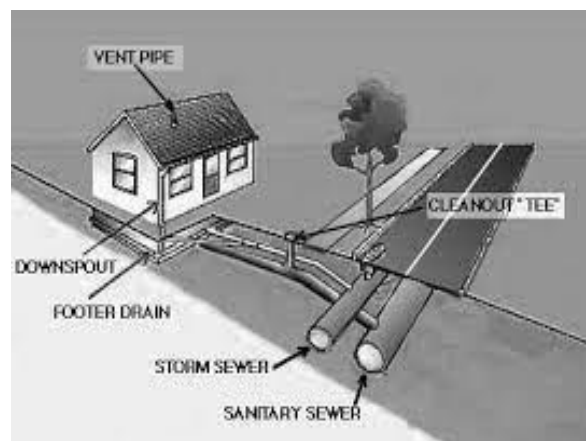
Sump Pumps:

If you use a sump pump in your basement, it is illegal to drain the water into the basement sanitary sewer drain or laundry tub. Sump pumps must be discharged outside of the house to the yard or drainway that will prevent the water from draining directly to the street. Call the Public Works department if you need more information.

Some Sanitary Districts will send out this information to their residents annually:

You may want to contact your sanitary district to find out if they have annual scheduled cleaning dates.

The important information for any district when sewer cleaning is being done is that we ask that you please try to keep your toilet lids closed as much as possible during this time. We will be running high pressure water through the sewer lines to clean them. Sometimes this creates an air pocket that moves the water in your laterals back through your drains. The water coming back through your toilets or drains will only be the water that was in your toilet or traps. This will **not** be the water from the main (city) sewer.



Sanitary Sewer Jetting Program

Sewer System Cleaning Information:

The sewer department or contractor are conducting sewer line cleaning on the municipality owned sanitary sewers throughout the year to provide residents with the best service possible. The following information has been put together to help this process go smoothly as we clean the mains in your street.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Is the sewer main in my street going to be cleaned?

The Municipalities sanitary sewer system is cleaned on a preventative schedule. The workers will stop at each manhole and flush the lines to keep them cleaned out.

How do you clean sewer lines?

The Municipality or Contractor will be utilizing high pressure water jets and a high velocity vacuum to scour the lines and remove the grease and debris from the lines. In special cases, the use of a “Root Cutter” to clear tree roots or other stubborn debris and obstructions from the lines may be needed.

Are there any problems that can arise during these cleaning activities?

The answer is YES. While we expect a majority of the cleaning to go by uneventfully, there are occasions where we can run into trouble that could impact you. Below is a list of common problems and steps we request you take to minimize the impact.

Air bursts in home:

Air bursts are uncommon, but possible, when your homes venting system is not working properly or is poorly installed. Air pressure builds up in the sewer line and causes toilets, sinks or floor drains to “burp” or air to vent from that location. This usually results in a temporary odor, noise, and water from the P-traps splashing or bubbling.

Odor in your home:

Probably the most common problem we encounter, the jetting process can create a vacuum environment in the sewer lines and actually empty the traps under your sinks, toilets, tubs, etc. The result will be the temporary loss of odor control in your home. The remedy for this situation is to simply run water in sinks and tubs to restore traps.

How long does the cleaning take?

The actual cleaning in front of your home will only last about 30 minutes. In some heavy cleaning areas, the cleaning may last a bit longer.

Will cleaning also clean my lateral?

No, sewer laterals benefit very little from the cleaning that occurs in the main. The cleaning will, however, clear the end of your lateral to enhance flow from your home.

What lines do you clean?

The Municipality or contractor will be cleaning “Gravity Sanitary Sewer Lines” owned by the Town/City. If you have a grinder pump, you’re most likely serviced by a pressure sewer line and will not be cleaned in this manner.