



Rockaway Township Municipal Utility

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Homeowner Sanitary Sewer Maintenance

Cracked pipes, leaky manholes, improperly connected storm drains, down spouts, pumps, and other openings, including exposed property line cleanouts are all places where water can flow into and infiltrate Rockaway Township's wastewater system. If the system becomes overwhelmed (particularly after heavy storms, rainfall, snowfall, or melting snow) sewage can back up and potentially overflow into the environment.

Sewage system inflow and infiltration impacts the size of Rockaway Township's collection systems, and ultimately, the rate businesses and residents pay to operate and maintain it. Thus, an important objective of Rockaway Township Municipal Utility - Sewer Division is to eliminate inflow and infiltration as a way to maximize our wastewater treatment facility's capacity, minimize our cost of sewage treatment, and prevent damaging environmental overflows.

What can I do to prevent sewer overflow?

You can play a role in helping to solve the problem of sewage overflow by:

- Maintaining and repairing your property line sewer clean-out line- Your property line sewer clean-out line is a pipe that connects your home to Rockaway Township's public sewer system. A cracked or deteriorated clean-out line, or one filled with tree roots can allow groundwater to seep into the system. Note: The Township can attempt to unstop a private sewer lateral line, however the homeowner is ultimately responsible.
- Keeping the top of your property line clean-out cap visible- If the top of your property line clean-out cap is covered with overgrown grass or landscaping, make sure to expose it. Doing so will aid Township Utility crews in case of sewer issues or backups.
- Clean roof vents leading from toilets annually (these are identifiable by a pipe on the roof). Failure to clean these vents may result in stoppages, causing dangerous sewer line gases to back up into your residence.
- Make sure your lateral clean-out cap is in good working condition. If you are uncertain about your clean-out cap, have a plumber inspect it. If you have had blockages in the past, have a plumber routinely clear your lateral.
- Grease blocking sewer pipes is a serious maintenance problem for both the Township and homeowners. When grease washes down a sink, it sticks to the sides of the sewer pipes. As grease builds up, it can and will block pipes and restrict flow, it can block pipes completely and cause raw sewage to back up into your home and overflow into the streets and streams. HELP keep sewers fat free. Pour cooking grease into a can and store it in the freezer. When the can is full, toss it in the trash.

Additionally, you will be required to fix any improper connections, such as downspouts, driveway drains or sump pumps that are directly connected to Rockaway Township sewer system. The stormwater collected from these devices must be drained to your property or directly connected to a separate stormwater system.

Sewer Stoppages and Clogs

What you put down the sink, garbage disposal or flush down the toilet matters! Major contributors of sewer line stoppages and clogs include: household fats, oils, and grease (FOG); motor oil; eggshells; coffee grounds; kitty litter; diapers; sanitary napkins; newspapers; soiled rags, and paper towels. Below are some general guidelines that will help safeguard the sewer system and reduce costs for everyone:

DON'T!	DO!
	<p>Do scrape grease and food residue from dishes and pans into a garbage bag before placing your dishes into your dishwasher or sink. This will reduce grease build-up in the sewer lines.</p>
<p>DON'T flush motor oils, transmission fluids, anti-freeze, paints, turpentine and caustic household cleaners down the toilet, garbage disposal, or sewer manholes!</p>	<p>Do seek out a hazardous material disposal site.</p>
<p>DON'T flush anything down the toilet that will not dissolve and could plug the sewer mains, including disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, bandages, rags, and plastic bags.</p>	<p>Do wrap/ seal coffee grounds, eggshells, and kitty litter in solid waste containers.</p>
<p>Don't let hair go down the sink, shower, or bathtub drain!</p>	<p>Do empty washing machine lint into a garbage bag to avoid the discharge of lint into the sewer line.</p>
<p>Never flush medical waste, toxic substances, or flammable, reactive, explosive, or radioactive substances down the toilet or sink.</p>	<p>Do unplug drains naturally by pouring 1/4 cup of baking soda down the drain followed by 1/2 cup of white vinegar. Follow a few minutes later with boiling water.</p>

Prohibited Wastes:

- Flammable, reactive, explosive, corrosive, or radioactive substances
- Noxious or malodorous materials
- Medical or infectious wastes
- Solid or viscous materials which could cause obstruction to the flow or operation of the treatment plants
- Toxic substances
- Non-biodegradable oils
- Pollutants which result in the emission of hazardous gases