

Sewerage Issues

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 the worst case scenario occurs –waste water comes back up through the drain, the problem may be outside of the house in the sewer service or the sewer main. Please notify Nemaquin Inc. if a sewer cleaning service is cleaning your private sewer line so the board can make certain nothing goes into the main sewer line.

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 Backups

If you suspect a sewer obstruction or back up and do not know where the blockage is, contact Nemaquin Inc before contacting a drain cleaning company. Representatives of the board will inspect the sewer main through a manhole to determine if there is a blockage in the sewer main line. If there is no problem in the sewer main, the blockage is in your sewer service pipe between the sewer main and the house. Often times root invasion from mature trees into old sewer services are causes of obstruction. If it is determined that no blockage or restrictions exist in the town's sanitary sewer system, the property owner is advised to contact a professional plumber or drain cleaning service to have the private sewer service inspected. The board cannot make a recommendation for drain cleaning services. A property owner may wish to obtain several estimates. We do however request that you notify us after a sewer service has been cleaned. Typically, the cleaning process pushes a significant amount of solids into the sewer main and could cause a blockage in the main, which could lead to an even bigger problem.

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 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, town bylaws 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.

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 Nemaquin Inc. if you need more information.

Any sewerage issue that is not an immediate threat to health and safety will be discussed at the next board meeting. A plan of action will be decided and the affected homeowner(s) will be notified following the meeting.