

The City of South Euclid has prepared this pamphlet to provide the homeowner with answers to typical questions about wastewater back-ups.

Q. What is a sanitary sewer?

A. A sanitary sewer is a pipe normally located in the street that was designed solely to transport wastewater from sanitary fixtures and floor drains inside your house or place of business. Sanitary sewers in your neighborhood are owned, operated and maintained by the City of South Euclid.

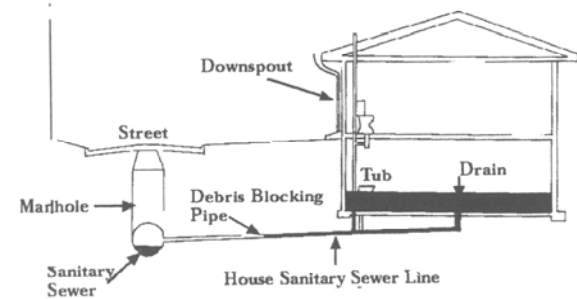
Q. What is a house sanitary sewer line?

A. The house sanitary sewer line (also called sewer lateral) is pipe that transports wastewater from the sanitary fixtures and floor drains within the home to the City main sanitary sewer. The homeowner owns and maintains the house sanitary sewer line from the house to the main City sewer.

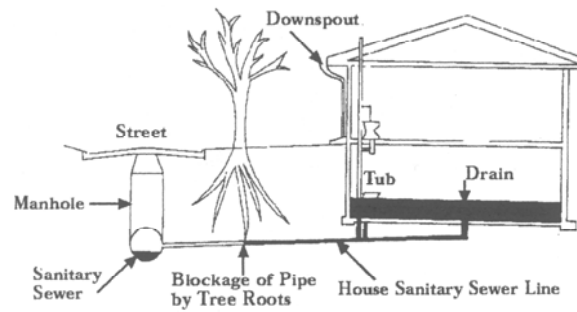
Q. What causes wastewater back-ups?

A. Wastewater back-ups can result in plumbing fixtures becoming temporarily inoperable and may be a cause of basement flooding. Some of the most common causes of wastewater back-ups are described and shown below:

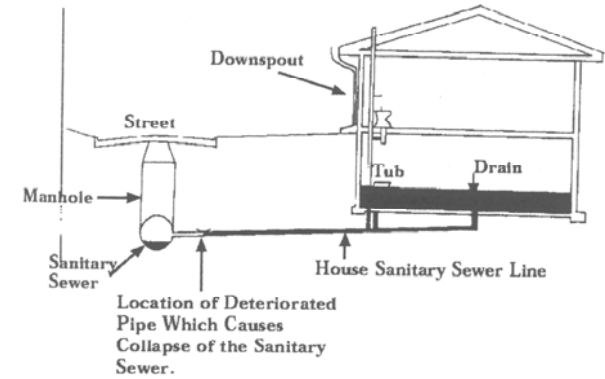
1. A partial or complete blockage of the house sanitary sewer line by debris or foreign objects.



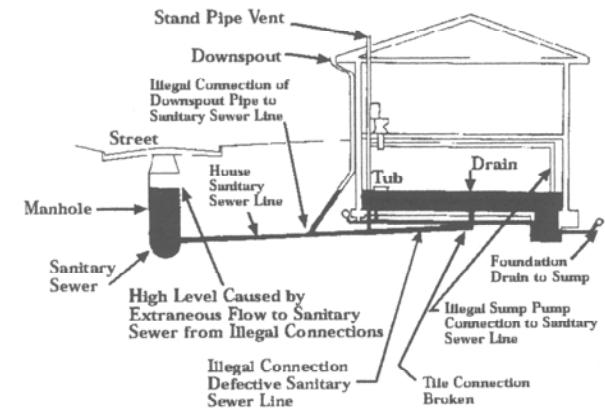
2. A partial or complete blockage of the house sanitary sewer by tree roots.



3. A house sanitary sewer line collapse caused by deteriorated sewer pipe.



4. Entrance to the sanitary sewer of large amounts of extraneous water from the illegal connection of sources other than sanitary fixtures and floor drains. Such extraneous water generally will be present during periods of wet weather.

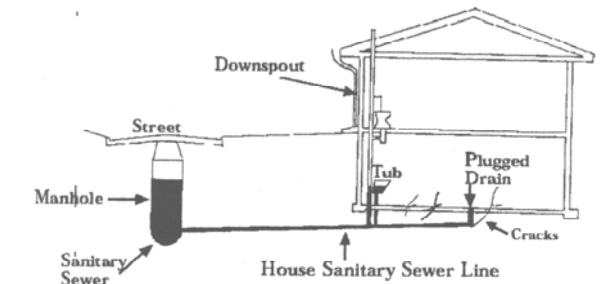


Q. What can the homeowner do to reduce the possibility of basement flooding due to wastewater back-up?

A. MODIFY INTERNAL PLUMBING
 Modifications to the internal plumbing within a home can reduce the possibility of basement flooding due to a wastewater back-up. Some of the more common plumbing modifications are listed below. We suggest that you consult a licensed and bonded plumber to determine the most appropriate modification for your home.

1. Insert a plug in the floor drain during heavy rains. NOT RECOMMENDED!

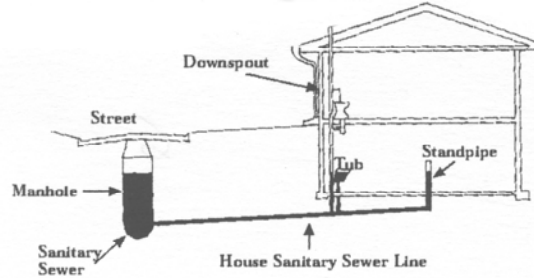
ADVANTAGES: Inexpensive and easy to install.
DISADVANTAGES: The plug can be forced out by water pressure. In addition, the screw-in type can cause the sewer pipe to break from water pressure. The back-up may cause seepage into the basement through cracks. Water will then seek the next higher opening (wash tub or basement toilet).



2. Insert a standpipe in the floor drain.

ADVANTAGES: Inexpensive, easily installed, can be left in place permanently if the floor drain is not needed during dry weather.

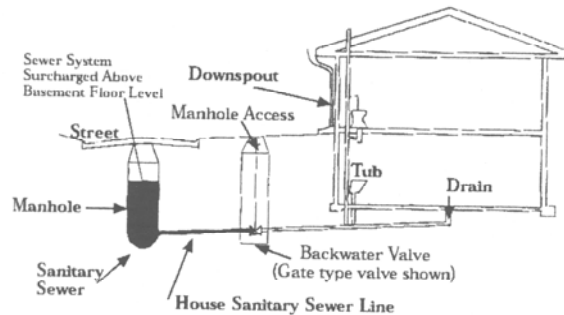
DISADVANTAGES: Basement flooding can still occur since backed-up water will seek the next higher opening (wash tub or basement toilet) because of pressure. If not installed properly, it could leak at the connection.



3. Install a backwater valve in the house sanitary sewer lead.

ADVANTAGES: The backwater valve prevents wastewater back-ups when closed.

DISADVANTAGES: Certain types of house plumbing cannot be used while the valve is closed. The backwater valve requires regular service to be dependable and must be accessible. The valve can jam open by solid waste or can freeze shut during periods of infrequent use.

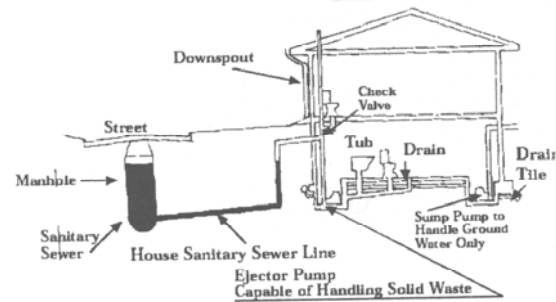


4. Install an overhead sewer along the basement ceiling, emptying through the basement and the foundation of the house.

ADVANTAGES: Most reliable for protecting against sewer back-up. Waste from upstairs toilets flows directly into the overhead line by gravity. Basement wastes flow into a sealed pit and pumped to the overhead line.

DISADVANTAGES: Expensive – an alternate source (battery pack or gasoline-powered generator) is needed if the basement plumbing is required to be operable during a power failure.

CAUTION REQUIRED: Before installing a device to pump wastewater to the sanitary sewer, the homeowner and the plumber should ensure that all water sources except sanitary fixtures and floor drains are disconnected. Failure to do so could overload the sanitary sewer with extraneous water and result in a back-up into the neighbor's basement.



5. Reduce extraneous water entering sanitary sewer.

Most extraneous water results from illegal connections to the sanitary sewer such as downspouts, sump pumps, footing tiles and commercial driveway drains. Defective house sewer lines send extraneous water to the sanitary sewer and thus, are also illegal connections. Removing illegal connections will reduce the flow of extraneous water to the sanitary sewer system. Even the homeowner who does not experience wastewater back-ups must remove illegal connections to prevent flooding in a neighbor's basement.

The City of South Euclid is committed to minimizing sewer back-ups through proactive maintenance of sewers, sewer rehabilitation and replacement projects and public education.

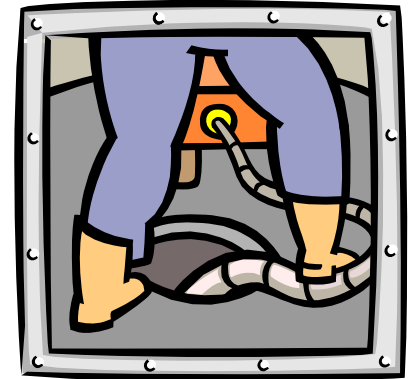
If you have a sewer back-up call:

City of South Euclid Service Department
216-691-4238

The Service Department can verify if the main sewer is flowing properly, determine if the problem is the homeowner's or City's responsibility, and provide helpful advice. The City will clean your sanitary sewer lateral between the test tee and the street for free. The City will clean the sanitary line from the test tee to your home for a fee.



Wastewater Back-up



Causes & Methods of Prevention