



## **Sanitary Sewer Backup Guidance for Homeowners**

Updated: June 2019

This document provides general guidance during and after sanitary sewer backup emergency. **This is guidance only.** Each emergency will require its own unique response by the homeowner.

1. When a backup occurs.
  - a. Contact the City of Washington's Wastewater Department
    - i. **Monday through Friday - 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. – Call 636-390-1030.**
    - ii. **After business hours – Call the police non-emergency number at 636-390-1050.**
  - b. A City crew will respond to address the situation within the public sewer system.
  - c. If the issue is not within the City sewer main, the homeowner should contact a licensed plumber to assess their private sewer lateral.

2. Immediate Cleanup Procedures
  - a. Use extreme caution with conducting cleanup procedures.
  - b. It is the sole responsibility of the property owner to complete all cleanup operations including costs. Reimbursement will be considered only after an investigation is completed and if the City is found liable.
  - c. Local companies that specialize in this type of work (open 24 hours):

<b>i. Rainbow International</b>	<b>Servpro</b>
<b>(636) 239-6664</b>	<b>(636) 583-5200</b>

3. Insurance Claim
  - a. In most cases, the City's nor the insurance carrier will not reimburse the homeowner for damages or clean-up costs. There would need to be liability found on the City in order for compensation to be received by a homeowner, and because many sewer blockages are unforeseen and unpreventable by the City there is no finding of liability against the City in most situations.
  - b. The homeowner should keep good records, which may include, photographs, videotapes, receipts, and itemized descriptions of damages.
  - c. Should the homeowner choose to file a claim, it may be filed with the City Clerk:
    - i. Sherri Klekamp  
405 Jefferson Street  
Washington, MO 63090  
(636)-390-1003

4. Preventing Future Back-ups
  - a. Sewer blockages occur as a result of improper items in the sewer. Any foreign items, except human waste should never be allowed to enter the sewer system.
  - b. The homeowner can consult with a licensed plumber and have a sewer back-flow preventer installed.
  - c. A personal homeowners' insurance policy often contains Water/Sewer Back-Up Coverage. Contact your insurance agent to make sure your policy includes this coverage.