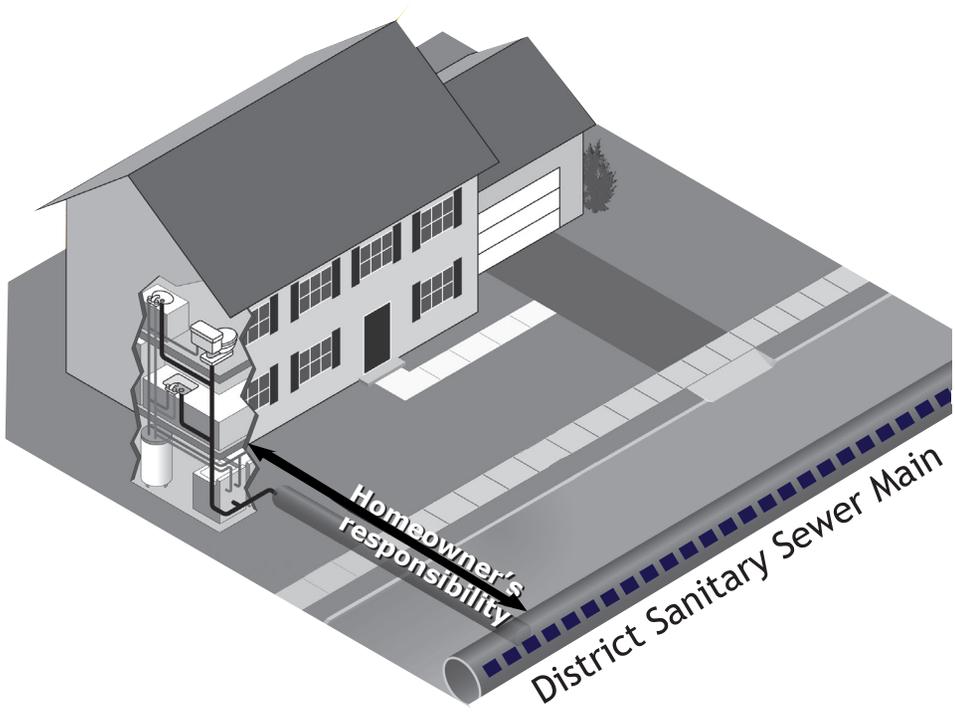


Homeowner's Guide to Sanitary Sewer Lines



Sanitary sewer line backups can be expensive to fix, so we all need to do our part to prevent them. Homeowners are responsible for the maintenance and repair of the service line - the portion of the pipe that extends from the home into the street, alley, easement or right-of-way - into the district's main sewer line, as well as any street and sidewalk repairs that result. Applewood Sanitation District is responsible for maintaining and repairing the district's main line.

If your community has a homeowners' association, the portion of the line for which you were responsible could be slightly different. Check with your HOA for more information.

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Applewood Sanitation District

Applewood Sanitation District is dedicated to providing on-going maintenance and repair to the district's sanitary sewer system, but occasionally backups do occur. Here are some answers to some of the most commonly asked questions:

What goes into the sewer line?

Whenever you turn on your faucet, do the laundry, take a shower or flush the toilet, the water flows from your sewer service line - the part of the pipe that extends from your house into the street, alley, easement or right-of-way - into the district's main sanitary sewer line. The district is responsible for repairing and maintaining their sanitary sewer main line. If your community has a homeowners' association, the portion of the line for which you were responsible could be slightly different. Check with your HOA for more information.

How do I know if there is a sewer line problem?

If you do suspect you have a sewer line backup, your line needs to be examined to determine the cause. If the backup is in the district's main line, Applewood Sanitation District staff will clear it. If the backup is in your service line, it typically can be handled through plumbing companies that can "snake" or clean the line. These companies typically are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

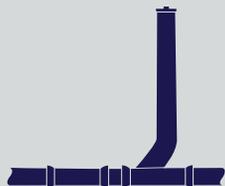
There are many reputable plumbing companies, but residents are encouraged to research a business before hiring them. The Better Business Bureau often lists companies that are bonded, licensed and insured. Residents can also ask the company for referrals, or residents can get a recommendation from family members or neighbors.

In rare instances, a plumber might tell you that there is significant damage to your line or that your line needs to be replaced. If you chose to verify the accuracy of this assessment, you can ask the company to put a remote camera in your line and provide a video for you to review.

While most homeowners' insurance policies will cover damage to the interior of the home from a back-up or line collapse, they do not reimburse for the cost of repair of the line itself. Umbrella and line insurance policies are available from private providers.

What is a cleanout?

A cleanout is an access point in your service line that allows a plumber to clear obstructions. It can be located in a variety of places, and not every home has one. If there is no cleanout, a plumber can still access the line, sometimes by removing a toilet.



If I smell sewer gas odor, does it mean something is wrong?

If you smell an odor or suspect a problem, please call us.



Why do sewer line backups occur?

One of the most common causes is tree roots that grow into the line. Trees won't bother an intact line, but any crack or separation will attract the roots to the moisture. Once they're in the line, roots will continue to grow - and continue to create the possibility of a serious backup. Homes built prior to 1980 have the highest risk for root intrusion, a problem which can be minimized by snaking and cleaning the line regularly.

In some cases, however, sewer line backups are caused when people put things down the drain or in the toilet that, over time, can cause serious clogs. Here are some things you can do to prevent that:

- Do not put greasy, dairy products or food scraps down the drain. Your garbage disposal doesn't break it down enough, and it can contribute to clogged lines. Instead, scrape food and grease off and put it in the trash.
- Do not flush hair, cigarette butts, aquarium gravel, kitty litter, Q-tips or cotton swabs down the toilet. The sewer lines are not designed to handle those things, and it can cause costly backups.
- Do not flush paper products other than toilet paper or tissue. Other paper products such as: paper towels or "flushable" wipes do not break down as quickly and can contribute to sewer problems.

