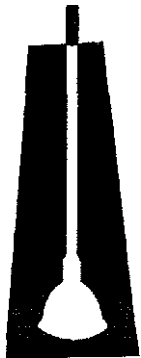


## What you need to know about: SEWER OVERFLOWS

**When a Sewer overflows, it is usually the result of inappropriate materials in the sewer system**

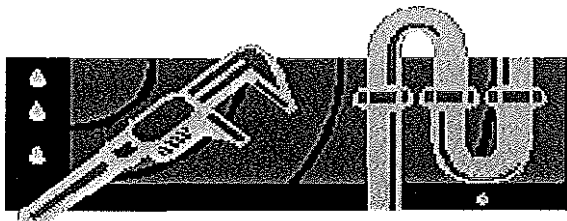
Have you ever experienced a sanitary sewer back-up or overflow? Luckily, most sewer back-ups and overflows can be prevented with a progressive preventive maintenance program. All of us can help to prevent them by wisely using the sanitary sewer system.



Sewer back-ups and overflows are frequently caused by improper materials such as fats, oils and grease being placed into the sewer system by the County's customers.

Since fats, oils and grease are lighter than water, they tend to accumulate at the top and sides of sewer pipes and can build up until a blockage occurs. If a blockage happens, the sewer backs up or overflows resulting in property and environmental damage.

By reducing the amount of fats, oils and grease that enter the sewer system from your home, you can help to protect the environment by preventing sewer back-ups and overflows.



## DOs&DON'Ts of Sanitary Sewer Systems

Sanitary sewer systems are designed to handle three things: used water, human body waste, and toilet paper. You can do some simple things that will help Kent County Department of Public Works protect water quality and maintain the sewer system.

**DO NOT:** Use the toilet as a wastebasket.

**DO NOT:** Use the sewer as a means to dispose of food scraps

**DO:** Collect grease in a container and dispose of it in the garbage

**DO:** Place food scraps in waste containers or garbage bags for disposal with solid waste, or start a compost pile.

**DO:** Place a wastebasket in the bathroom to dispose of refuse. Disposable diapers, condoms and personal hygiene products do not belong in the sewer system.

These suggestions can save you money too! Most sewer back-ups occur between the house and the City/Township's sewer main, where the property owner is responsible for correcting the problem. Avoiding blockages means avoiding plumbing bills.

To report a sewer backup or overflow contact:

B & B Water/Wastewater Consultants  
Joe Baxter  
(616) 877-4196



## Help Prevent Back Ups

Certain items should not be disposed of in the sanitary sewer system. The following items should be disposed of in your trash can, NOT in the sanitary sewer system:

- Diapers
- Cooking Grease
- Paper towels
- Food  
(Do NOT use the disposal for all food items)
- Feminine hygiene products
- Condoms



Improper disposal of these items has caused backups. Please dispose properly.

## Reminder

Property owners are responsible for the maintenance, repair, and cleaning of the service line from the house to the municipal main line.

## For More Information

Dorr-Leighton Wastewater at 616-891-8238  
dl@leightontownship.org

### ***Who Pays for the Damage?***

Did you know that most basic homeowner's insurance policies do not cover sewer or basement drain backups? In most cases, additional coverage needs to be added to the policy to protect homeowners from backups. Contact your insurance agent for more information on adding this to your policy.