

For More Information

Sewage Spill Reference Guide

This page has been produced to inform residents, businesses, and homeowners about the causes of, prevention of, and proper response to sewage spills.

What is a Sewage Spill?

Sewage spills occur when the wastewater being transported via underground pipes overflows through a manhole, cleanout, or broken pipe. Sewage spills can cause health hazards, damage to homes and businesses, and threaten the environment, local waterways, and beaches.

Any person who causes or permits sewage in excess of 1,000 gallons to be discharged to state waters shall immediately notify the Office of Emergency Services.

Any person who fails to provide the notice required by this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished by a fine (less than \$20,000) and/or imprisonment for not more than one year.

California Office of Emergency Services
(800) 852-7550

Sanitation District of Los Angeles
Public Information
1955 Workman Mill Road
P.O. Box 4998
Whittier, CA 90607
(562) 908-4288, extension 2301

County of Los Angeles
Department of Public Works
www.888CleanLA.com
To Report Illegal Dumping into the
County's Storm Drain System,
Call:
1(888)CLEAN LA
24 Hours per Day

The tips contained in this brochure provide useful information to help prevent water pollution. If you have other suggestions, please contact your city's stormwater representatives or call the Los Angeles County Stormwater Program.



Help Prevent Ocean Pollution

Sewage Spill

Reference Brochure



**Your Responsibility
as a Private
Property Owner**

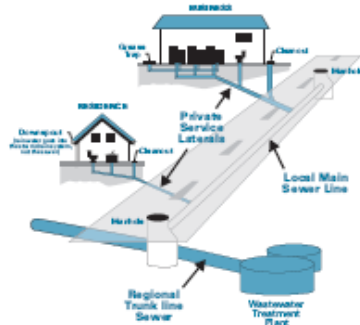
P R O J E C T
Pollution
P R E V E N T I O N

How you can prevent Sewage Spills

How a Sewer System Works

A property owner's sewer pipes are called service laterals and are connected to larger local main and regional trunk lines. Service laterals run from the connection at the home to the connection with the public sewer (including the area under the street). These laterals are the responsibility of the property owner and must be maintained by the property owner. Many city agencies have adopted ordinances requiring maintenance of service laterals. Check with your city sewer/local public works department for more information.

Operation and maintenance of local and regional sewer lines are the responsibility of the city sewer/public works departments and public sewer districts.



Preventing Grease Blockages

Dispose of grease properly! Do not put grease down drains. Scrape off plates, pans, etc., into grease cans for recycling. Homeowners may place small amounts into trash bins for disposal. Restaurants and large buildings, such as commercial food establishments, may have grease traps or interceptors to keep grease out of sewer pipes.

To work correctly, a grease trap or interceptor must be:

- Sized correctly and designed to handle the expected amount of grease.
- Installed properly per local codes.
- Maintained properly, cleaned and serviced regularly.

How you can prevent Sewage Spills

1. Never put grease down garbage disposals, drains, or toilets.
2. Perform periodic cleaning to eliminate grease, debris and roots in your service laterals.
3. Repair any structural problems in your sewer system and eliminate any rainwater infiltration/inflow leaks into your service laterals.

Common Causes of Sewage Spills

Grease builds up inside and eventually blocks sewer pipes. Grease gets into the sewer from food establishments, household drains, as well as from poorly maintained commercial grease traps and interceptors. Grease is the most common cause of pipe blockages.

Structure problems caused by tree roots in the lines, broken/cracked pipes, missing or broken cleanout caps, or undersized sewers can cause blockages.

Infiltration and inflow (I/I) impacts pipe capacity and is caused when groundwater or rainwater enters the sewer system through pipe defects and illegal connections.

You Are Responsible for a Sewage Spill Caused by a Blockage or Break in Your Sewer Lines!

Time is of the essence in dealing with sewage spills. You are required to immediately:

Control and minimize the spill. Keep spills contained on private property and out of gutters, storm drains, and public waterways by shutting off or not using the water.

Use sandbags, dirt and/or plastic sheeting to prevent sewage from entering the storm drain system.

Clear the sewer blockage. Always wear gloves and wash your hands. It is recommended that a plumbing professional be called for clearing blockages and making necessary repairs.

Always notify your city sewer/public works department or public sewer district of sewage spills. If the spill enters the stormdrain also notify the Health Care Agency. In addition, if it exceeds 1,000 gallons notify the Office of Emergency Services.

For additional Information

For more information about pollution protection or additional brochures
PLEASE CALL:

City of Compton
(310)605-5505



Never let any chemical products or polluted washwater run off your yard and into the street or storm drain.