

**Your sewer has backed up...
What do you do now?**

Cause of Problem: A sewer back up can be caused by a variety of things. In some instances, a blockage can occur in the publicly owned sewer main located under the street. In other instances, it can be caused by a blockage in your privately owned sewer lead (service line) that connects your home or business to the sewer main. City staff is responsible for maintaining the public sewer main and un-plugging the main if there is a blockage. You are responsible for maintaining your sewer lead (service line from sewer main to house) and in having it un-plugged if, it is blocked.

Reporting the Problem: If you have received this door hangar notice, then you have completed the first step in reporting the problem. The next step is to contact City Hall at (616) 527-4170 to advise City staff that you have experienced a sewer back up. Upon being notified, the City will mail you a packet of information for reporting the back up and itemizing any losses you have experienced. The information that you are mailed is also available on the City's website at www.ci.ionia.mi.us under City Government–Public works. It is necessary that you submit the information requested per the instructions to the City in order to preserve your right to make a claim under Michigan Public Act 222 of 2001.

Insurance Claim?: If it is necessary to hire a company to clean-up the sewer back-up or cover the cost of making repairs due to the damage, please consult with your homeowners insurance company. **DO NOT ASSUME THAT SINCE YOU ARE CONNECTED TO THE PUBLIC SEWER SYSTEM THAT THE CITY IS FINANCIALLY LIABLE FOR ANY CLEAN-UP, DAMAGE OR LOSSES.** As referenced above, Michigan Public Act 222 of 2001 determines when the operator of a public sewer system is financially liable for any damages.

“Cleaning Up the Mess”: It is important to do a thorough job when cleaning up after a sewer back up. **DO NOT** bring children into the flooded area during clean up! The following are suggestions on how to clean-up a sewage back up.

Cleaning and Sanitizing:

1. Remove all sewage by natural draining or pumping.
2. Remove dirt, soil and debris from surfaces that came in contact with the sewage.
3. Wash down all walls, floors and surfaces that the sewage touched with clean, hot water and a low suds detergent.
4. Rinse with hot water.
5. Sanitize by rinsing walls, floors and surfaces using 8 tablespoons of laundry bleach in each gallon of water used.
6. Air out/dry the area by opening windows or using fans.
7. Prevent tracking sewage into clean areas.
8. All food items in the back-up area should be discarded.
9. Clothing, carpets, furniture, toys and/or bedding should be discarded unless they are cleaned and disinfected. Movable objects could be put outdoors to be cleaned and dried in the sunlight. Discarded clothing should be placed in a tightly closed container until pick-up or disposal.

