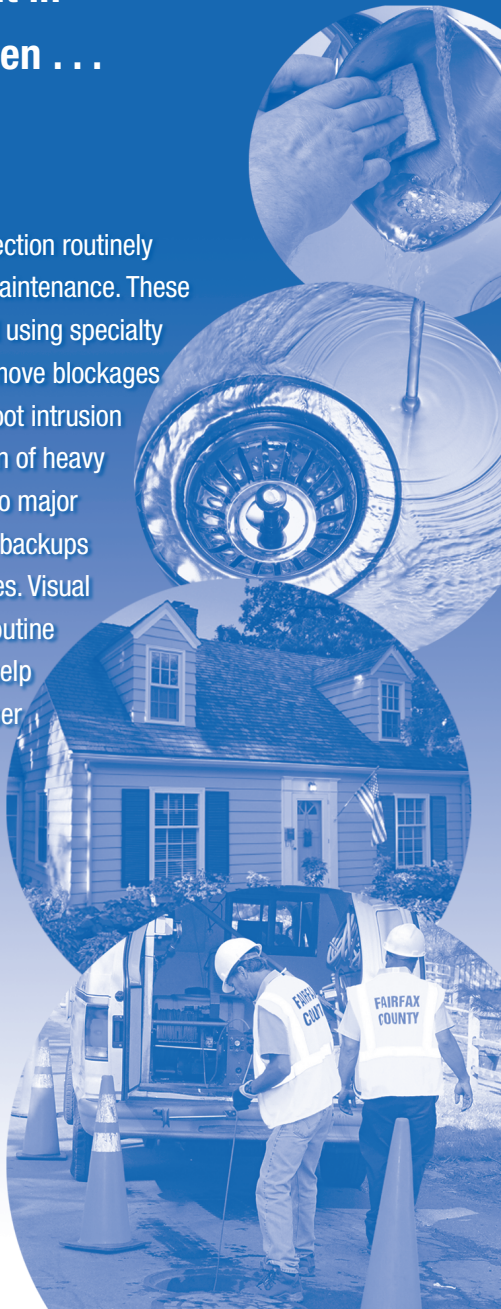


We all play a part in preventing sewage backups and it all starts right in your kitchen . . .

Wastewater Collection routinely schedules line maintenance. These lines are cleaned using specialty equipment to remove blockages caused by tree root intrusion and accumulation of heavy greases – the two major causes of sewer backups into private homes. Visual inspection and routine sewer cleaning help reduce the number of backups and overflows in the sanitary sewer system.



Wastewater Management Mission

To safely collect, treat, and monitor wastewater in compliance with all regulatory requirements, using state of the art technology in the most effective manner. We work to improve the environment and enhance the quality of life in Fairfax County.

County of Fairfax
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS &
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Wastewater Collection Division
6000 Freds Oak Road
Burke, VA 22015
24-hour Trouble Response Center
703-323-1211

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/wastewater



PREVENTING SEWAGE BACKUPS

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Important Answers to Your Questions from Fairfax County's Wastewater Collection Division (WCD)

Q How could a sewage backup affect me?

A Sewer backups result from a blockage in the County's sanitary sewer line or in the private sewer lateral pipe that connects your home to the County sewer line. If a blockage occurs, wastewater may enter your home through floor drains, showers, or toilets in the basement.

Q What causes sewage backups?

A Accumulation of fats, oil and grease (FOG) and root intrusion in both private sewer laterals and public sewer lines are major reasons for sewer backups. Also, items which are too large for wastewater pipes to handle such as toys and sanitary napkins get flushed down toilets, which can cause backups. Another cause of wastewater blockages within the County's system is vandalism. Leaves, sticks, rocks, bricks, clothing, toys and trash have been found in sanitary sewer manholes.

Q What can I do to help?

A Call the **Wastewater Collection Division (703-323-1211)** immediately if you notice any cases of vandalism to sewer lines or manholes. This way, the debris can be removed before it causes a backup.

Avoid putting cooking oils and grease down your garbage disposal or any household drain. Not only could it accumulate in County lines, it could also build up in your own system and might eventually require the services of a plumber.

Do not flush disposable diapers or sanitary napkins down the toilet even if the labels indicate that you can do so. These were not meant to be disposed of in this manner and besides stopping up lines, could damage your plumbing system.

Q What should I do if sewage begins to back up into my home?

A Call the Wastewater Collection Division **24-hour Trouble Response Center at 703-323-1211, TTY 711**. Personnel from WCD will inspect the County sewer. If the problem is in the County sewer, the County will take corrective action.

A quick check with several nearby neighbors will help you determine if the blockage is widespread or if it is limited to just your home.

Q What does the County do to prevent sewage backups?

A Fairfax County's Wastewater Collection Division is responsible for operating and maintaining more than 3300 miles of sanitary sewer, 63 pumping stations, and 57 flow meters.

Q Who is responsible if the blockage is located in a customer's service line?

A The resident or building owner is responsible for maintenance of the private sewer line which extends from the home/business to the County sewer, including the connection to the sewer. Therefore, he/she is responsible for any damages resulting from blockages in the private sewer line.

Q Who is responsible if the blockage occurs in a County sewer system?

A If WCD personnel determine that the blockage occurred in the County sewer line, corrective action will be taken by WCD. Any private property damaged may be reimbursed, except in the case of vandalism to the County sanitary sewer system. Fairfax County's **Risk Management Division (703-324-3040)** handles all claims for reimbursement for damaged property.

Q Will my insurance cover any damage resulting from sewage backups?

A In the majority of cases, a special rider is needed to your homeowner's or renter's insurance policy to cover damages related to sewage backups or water damage. This optional coverage is available from your insurance provider. However, you must usually request it, as it is not automatically included in most policies.

Who should I call to report a sewage backup?

Emergency crews from the County are on call 24 hours a day to assist you. In an emergency such as a wastewater line backup contact the Wastewater Collection Division:

Emergency	(703) 323-1211
TTY	711
Non-Emergency	(703) 250-2003
Fax	(703) 250-7632