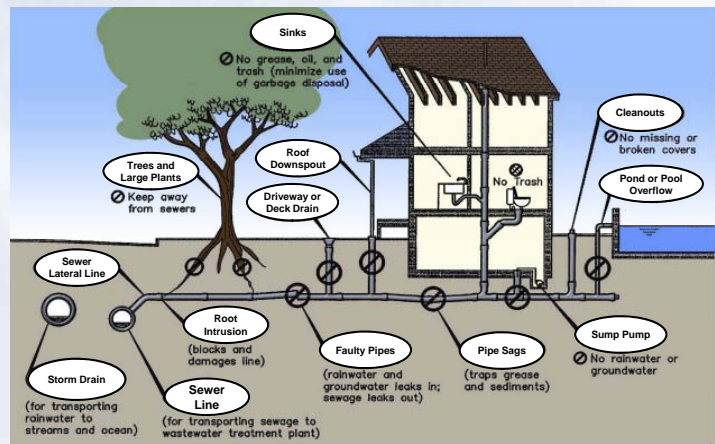


# Prevent Sanitary Sewer Overflows

## Protect Our Health and the Environment

One cause of Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs) is blockage in sewer pipes. Excess rainwater entering pipes also causes overflows. You can help reduce or prevent SSOs by following these guidelines at home:

- Disconnect downspouts, driveway or foundation drains, groundwater sump pumps, or any other stormwater connection from the sanitary sewer system. **It is illegal to connect the sump pump to the sanitary sewer.** During rainstorms, too much water enters the system, which causes the sanitary sewer to overflow into nearby ditches and streams or backup into downstream homes.
- Re-direct downspouts so that rain soaks into your yard or garden.
- Install sump pumps to help keep your home dry by pumping groundwater away from your foundation. They should be drained onto your lawn or yard area because it is illegal to connect the sump pump to the sanitary sewer.
- Landscape your yard so that water flows away from your house and foundation drains.
- Install gutters to direct rainwater away from your house.
- Repair broken house laterals (connection to the public sewer line) to prevent stormwater from leaking into pipes and causing sewer backups in your home. This is the homeowner's responsibility.
- Collect waste cooking oil in a can – do not pour it down the sink. When oil cools off, put the can in a trash bag, seal it tightly, and throw it away in the trash.
- Scrape leftover food from plates into the trash or compost it. Don't scrape food from plates into your sink or garbage disposal.
- Wipe oily pans thoroughly with a used paper napkin or paper towel before washing in the sink.
- Throw fatty foods, such as ice cream, gravy, mayonnaise, and salad dressings, into the garbage can instead of washing them down the sink. Fatty foods can clog pipes.
- Minimize or avoid using the garbage disposal because a lot of food waste contains fats, oils, and grease that could clog your pipes and/or the city's sanitary sewers.
- Install and maintain baskets, screens, and/or strainers over all sink and floor drains.



*Help Prevent Sewage Spills!  
Keep grease, trash, rainwater, and roots out of  
our sewer system!*

Tell your friends and neighbors what they can do to help prevent SSOs!