



Water and Waste Department

Steps to Protect Your Home from Sewer Backup and Water Damage

1. Arrange for a licensed plumber to install a backwater valve on a sewer line in the basement of your home. This device, if properly installed, automatically closes if sewage backs up from the main sewer. A backflow prevention device installed in the floor drain is not a Manitoba Plumbing Code approved backwater valve.
2. Install a sump pit drainage system (includes a sump pit, a sump pump and a pump discharge pipe).
3. Check and maintain your backwater valve and sump pit drainage system regularly
4. Don't drain water from your sump pump into your floor drain. Not only is it illegal, it increases the risk of basement flooding for you and your neighbours. The sewer system is designed to manage only normal flows of wastewater, not sump pump water. Keep the end of the hose well away from your property line so that water does not flow onto the street, lane, boulevard, sidewalk, or your neighbour's property.
5. Improve drainage around your house.
 - Build up the ground around your house so that water flows away from your basement walls. Also examine sidewalks, patios, decks, and driveways. These can settle over time and cause water to drain back towards your basement walls.
 - Extend downspouts so that water flows away from your house and doesn't pool next to the basement walls or basement windows. If your downspouts are connected to your home's sewer system, disconnect them.
 - Clean debris from eavestroughs regularly. If they overflow even when clean, replace them with larger size eavestroughs and downspouts.
6. Don't throw garbage down your sinks or toilets. Garbage (e.g., dental floss, diapers, cotton swabs) that gets into your sewer through your drains can clog your sewer and cause sewer backup.
7. Have your private sewer service pipe cleaned periodically. As the property owner, you own the sewer pipe from your home or building to the City's sewer. This includes the part under your property and the part under City property.
8. Avoid pouring fat, oil, and grease down your drain. Grease hardens as it cools and sticks to the inner lining of sewer pipes, eventually causing a blockage.
9. Lift appliances such as washers, dryers and freezers off the floor by putting blocks of wood under them so they don't get damaged by water. It is common for backups to be less than four inches of water.
10. Don't store belongings in paper boxes on the floor in the basement. Store them on a shelf or in plastic totes.

11. Don't put grass clipping, leaves or other debris on the streets as they can plug the drains and prevent proper drainage, particularly during heavy rainfalls. Plugged drains cause water to build up on the street, which could cause water to drain into the sewer system through manhole covers and increase your risk of basement flooding. If you notice a plugged drain, please call 311.