

The Toilet is NOT a trash can

Many common products contain hazardous chemicals that can pollute our groundwater, creeks, rivers and lakes.

NEVER DUMP THESE HAZARDOUS WASTES IN THE TRASH, SINK, TOILET, GUTTER OR STORM DRAIN.

- Batteries, fluorescent light bulbs and tubes, mercury thermometers and thermostats
- Solvent-based glue, paint, strippers, wood preservatives and nail polish
- Antifreeze, engine cleaners and degreasers, gasoline and motor oil
- Antifreeze, engine cleaners and degreasers, gasoline and motor oil
- Fertilizers and pesticides
- Pool and spa water and pool chemicals

Take Care of Your Toilet

Leaking toilets are expensive! Most of the time it is a bad flush valve (the stopper at the bottom of the tank connected to the handle). Any hardware store carries flush valves. They are inexpensive and fairly easy to install.



PLEASE HELP THE CITY SEWER DEPARTMENT - If you or your plumber clear a blockage with a sewer cleaning machine, please notify the City Office so appropriate measures can be taken to assure no blockage of the public sewer main will occur.

“NO MATTER WHAT THE LABEL SAYS, THE ONLY ITEMS YOU SHOULD FLUSH ARE HUMAN WASTE AND TOILET PAPER!”

Never flush wipes, diapers or feminine hygiene products, even if they are labeled “flushable”. These products do not disintegrate in water as quickly as toilet paper and often cause clogs in public sewer mains. If wipes can clog large sewer mains, they can definitely clog your home’s much smaller sewer pipes, requiring you to pay a plumber to clear the blockage.

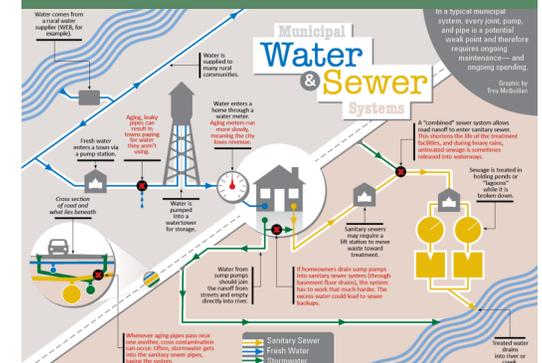
Never flush medications down the sink or toilet. Studies have shown that this can present environmental problems and certain medications have been found in water supplies.

Recommended disposal method is to place the medication in a disposable bag, crush the medication, add enough water to dissolve them, then mix with soil, coffee grounds or cat litter, seal the bag and toss in your trash.

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YOUR CITY SEWER DEPARTMENT WANTS YOU TO KNOW.....



City of Alma
Waste Water Superintendent -
Travis Dunse

Tel: 308 928 2242
On Call After Hours 308 920 1047

Preventing Sewer Line Backup and Overflow

High on the list of experiences nobody wants to have is a sewer backup or overflow. Fortunately, this experience can usually be avoided by being aware of what causes backups and avoiding those causes. **The two primary causes of sewer backups and overflows are**

GREASE and ROOTS.



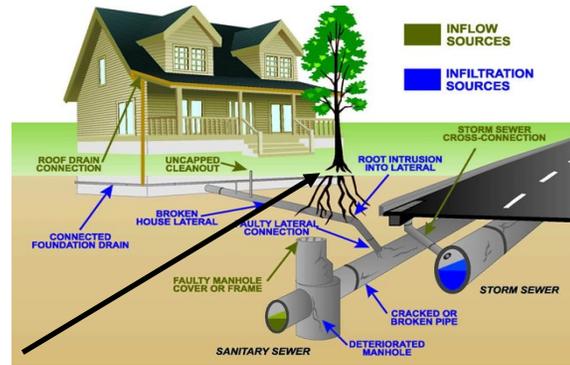
Grease and greasy food waste are the most frequent causes of clogs and costly repairs. If cooking grease or oil is poured down the drain or flushed down toilets, even when followed by hot water, it eventually

cools down, congeals, builds up, and hardens, eventually forming a plug in both home and City sewer lines. Over time, this situation creates backups and overflows.

This situation can be avoided if you:

- **Never pour grease down sink drains or into toilets. Grease clings to pipes and builds up over time.**
- **Scrape grease and food scraps from plates, pots, pans, utensils and grills into a can or the trash for disposal**
- **Wipe greasy pans and dishes with a paper towel and place the towel with food scraps in your trash**
- **Do not put grease down the garbage disposal.**
- **Dispose of small amounts of liquid cooking oil in tightly sealed containers in the trash**
- **Collect grease in a re-sealable container and bring it to Alma's hazardous waste collection (held the first and third Saturdays of March, June and September)**

See City website www.almacity.com to learn how to safely recycle or dispose of hazardous waste.



Plant roots are another frequent cause of sewer backups and overflows. The roots of shrubs and trees naturally seek any water source. The roots probe the sewer line seeking any opening, such as a crack or a poorly sealed joint. Once the sewer line is penetrated, the roots form a ball and block the line.

The best way to avoid root blockages is **not to plant trees and shrubs close to your home's sewer service line.** However, if trees or shrubs already are growing near the line, watch for reductions in flows down the drain. If a reduction in flow occurs, have a plumber check the line and clear the blockage if necessary.

If flow through the sewer has stopped, call a plumber. If it's just sluggish, you can restore the flow and prevent future stoppage by using copper sulfate.

Copper sulfate will kill not only roots growing in the sewer line but also the organisms which produce offensive odors. Copper sulfate will require several days to several weeks to work. Spectacular results are sometimes obtained.

Pour copper sulfate crystals of medium size into the commode or toilet stool in small amounts. Follow instructions on the container for best results. Under NO circumstances should copper sulfate crystals be placed in sink or tub traps. Much smaller amounts of copper sulfate could be used two or three times a year to prevent stoppage where root invasion problems are frequent. Copper sulfate can be obtained from drugs stores or garden centers.

Tips –prevent clogged lines inside and outside

Cleanouts are a direct line to the sewer and consequently to sewer gas smell.

The following may help with odor problems.

- Make sure traps are full of water, since the water in floor drains and other drain traps tends to evaporate
- Make sure all caps are on and secure
- Sometimes a small amount of bleach poured into the drain can help

Clean Clogged Drains Carefully

Cleaning clogged drains isn't as easy as dumping a chemical drain cleaner down and waiting. Did you know that waste removal lines feed into a larger main line carrying waste water away from your house into the City's sewer system?

- * Use **liquid** drain cleaners instead of crystal drain cleaners. Crystal drain cleaners may solidify in your pipes.
- * Experts say you should never use a chemical drain cleaner to fix a "total blockage". You'll need the aid of a sewer cleaning machine, which clears away the blockage and restores the pipes to a more pristine condition.
- * Try preventing the problem altogether: **Once a month, pour one cup of baking soda, followed by one cup of white vinegar down the drain. Wait an hour and flush with warm water. The combination fizzes away most of the buildup. This typically works for showers, tubs and kitchen sink drains.**

