

## Help Prevent Sewer Backups

Do not put the following products down the sewer:

- Cooking grease
- Diapers (infant or adult)
- Feminine hygiene products
- Food
- Cigarette butts
- Swifter's pads
- Paper towels or wipes
- Sump pump or downspout discharge
- Pharmaceuticals
- Household chemicals, oil, etc.

### Please

- Report broken clean outs
- Do not plant trees near sewer lines; keep bushes at least 5 feet



### Emergency Contact Numbers:

- Monday thru Friday, 8:00AM to 4:30PM:  
Wastewater Division  
(410) 996-6260
- All other times:  
Department of Emergency Services  
Dispatch Center  
(410) 996-5588



**For Additional Information Contact:**  
Cecil County Department of Public Works  
Wastewater Division  
123 Carpenters Point Road  
Perryville , MD 21903  
Phone (410) 996-6260  
Fax (410) 996-6263  
[www.ccgov.org](http://www.ccgov.org)

(Version 3/13/20) (Previous versions are obsolete and should not be used.)



**Cecil County  
Department of Public Works**

# Sewer Backups

**A Guide for County Sewer Customers:  
What You Should Know and How to  
Protect Yourself**



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## Is insurance coverage available to cover the cost of damages from sewer backups?

- Yes. Most regular homeowners insurance policies do not cover damage from floods or water or sewer backups. Special coverage is required.
- Maryland state law requires insurers that sell homeowners' insurance policies in Maryland to offer such backup coverage.
- Contact your insurance company for more information.

## Who is responsible for the cost of cleaning up a sewer backup?

- The County is not automatically responsible when a sewer backup occurs.
- There are many causes of backups which the County cannot control including such things as people flushing inappropriate items such as grease or diapers down a toilet or drain or tree roots growing into and obstructing sewer laterals.
- Generally, the County is responsible only if it was negligent in maintaining the main sewer lines.
- If you believe that the damage occurred as a direct result of the County's negligence, you can file a claim by calling the County's Risk Management Office at (410) 996-5250.

## Who do I call if I experience a sewer backup?

- During normal business hours (Monday thru Friday, 8:00am thru 4:30pm) call the Cecil County Department of Public Works Wastewater Division at (410) 996-6260.
- During all other times, call the Cecil County Department of Emergency Services dispatch center at (410) 996-5588.
- Wastewater Division staff will go to your residence or place of business as rapidly as possible to determine the nature and location of the sewer clog which is causing the backup.
- If the clog is in the section of the pipe for which the County is responsible, then Wastewater Division staff will take action to remove the clog and fix the problem.
- If the clog is in a section of pipe for which the property owner is responsible, then the Wastewater Division staff will advise the property owner to contact a licensed plumber or other professional to remove the clog; such work will be at the property owner's expense.



## What is the County's policy regarding responsibility for sewer line maintenance?

- All new construction must have a sanitary sewer clean out located at the property line.
- The Cecil County Department of Public Works Wastewater Division is responsible for maintenance of the sewer main and the lateral from the main to the property line.
- The property owner is responsible for maintenance of the sewer lateral from the property line to the building.
- Cecil County is not responsible for cleanup due to clogs in the lateral regardless of the location of the clog.
- Clean outs must be accessible at all times. Clean outs cannot be cut off or covered up.
- Property owners must report damaged clean outs to the County for repair.
- Cecil County will not be responsible for existing laterals that do not have clean outs at the property line. Installation of the clean out is the responsibility of the property owner.
- Installation of a clean out requires a plumbing permit and inspection.