



CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
ENGINEERING DIVISION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Laurel L. Prussing and Members of the City Council
FROM: William R. Gray, Public Works Director
Gale L. Jamison, Assistant City Engineer
Bradley M. Bennett, Civil Engineer
DATE: April 18, 2013
RE: Options Regarding Repair of Sanitary Sewer Laterals in Public Right-Of-Way

Background

Ordinance 2007-12-138, approved on December 17, 2007, established a reimbursement program for property owners for the cost of sewer lateral repairs located under City streets and sidewalks. The reimbursement program was intended to ease the financial burden for property owners who have to remove and replace a City street, alley, or sidewalk to repair their sewer service laterals. The percentage of City reimbursement was set at 50%, up to a maximum reimbursement amount of \$3,000, for the removal and replacement costs of public streets, alleys, or sidewalks resulting from sewer lateral repairs.

Ordinance 2013-02-016, which was approved on March 18, 2013, repealed Ordinance 2007-12-138 and established a new reimbursement program. The percentage of City reimbursement was increased to 75%, up to a maximum reimbursement amount was increased to \$4,500, for the removal and replacement costs of public streets, alleys, or sidewalks resulting from sewer lateral repairs.

The City Council directed the Public Works staff to research and report back to the Council on the following items:

- Policies on sanitary sewer lateral ownership within public right-of-way (R.O.W) of other central Illinois communities
- Maintenance practices and repair programs for sanitary sewer laterals in Illinois communities that own their laterals within the public R.O.W.
- The financial impact of the City assuming ownership of sanitary sewer laterals within the public R.O.W.

Central Illinois Agencies Sanitary Sewer Lateral Policy Research

Public Works staff surveyed thirteen central Illinois agencies regarding their policies on sanitary sewer lateral ownership within the public R.O.W. Those agencies included Champaign, Savoy, Rantoul, Danville, Decatur, Springfield, Forsyth, Peoria, Bloomington, Normal, Charleston, Mattoon, and the Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District (un-incorporated areas outside City). Twelve of the agencies responded to the survey. (Mattoon was the only agency not participating in the survey). A summary of the survey results is presented in Appendix A.

For all 12 agencies that participated in the survey, the sanitary sewer lateral within the public R.O.W. was owned by the property owner. Four of the agencies offered partial reimbursements for the costs associated with removal and replacement of City street or sidewalk pavements affected by the lateral repair. Those agencies included Champaign, Danville, Peoria, and Normal. The City of Springfield was the only agency to offer a full (100%) pavement reimbursement program for lateral repairs located within the public R.O.W. The remaining seven agencies (Savoy, Rantoul, Decatur, Forsyth, Bloomington, Charleston, and the Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District) did not offer any reimbursement for sewer lateral repairs located within the public R.O.W.

Urbana's sanitary sewer lateral ownership policy is consistent with the other twelve agencies surveyed. Urbana's pavement reimbursement program was exceeded by only one community (Springfield) that offered a 100% reimbursement compared to the 75% reimbursement that Urbana currently offers.

Illinois Communities that Own Laterals within the Public R.O.W. Research

Public Works staff surveyed seven communities that had been identified as ones owning the sanitary sewer lateral within the public R.O.W. Those communities included Carbondale, Rock Island, Morton, Addison, Galesburg, Pekin, and Schaumburg. Five of the communities responded to the survey; two communities (Morton and Pekin) did not participate in the survey. A summary of those survey results is presented in Appendix B.

In Galesburg and Rock Island the sanitary sewer lateral within the public R.O.W. was owned by the property owner. Rock Island offered a sanitary sewer lateral insurance program at a cost of \$9 per month to property owners who wanted to participate. Carbondale, Schaumburg, and Addison owned the sewer lateral within the public R.O.W.

Carbondale and Schaumburg required cleanouts located at the property line for all sewer laterals. Carbondale required the property owner to install the clean-out. In Schaumburg, the city installed the cleanout. Addison installed a clean-out on a lateral only after a back-up or blockage occurred. Carbondale, Schaumburg, and Addison cleaned and televised the sanitary sewer laterals. Addison cleaned and televised laterals with clean-outs on them every 6 months. Carbondale and Schaumburg cleaned and televised sewer laterals at the request of the property owner. All three communities repaired any lateral damage that occurred within the public R.O.W.

Addison and Carbondale sewer fees included treatment costs and were \$4.06 and \$3.54, respectively, per 100 cubic feet compared to Urbana's sewer fee, including treatment costs, of \$2.57 per 100 cubic

feet. Schaumburg had a sewer fee of \$1.11 per 100 cubic feet for the collection system compared to Urbana's sewer fee for the collection system of \$0.97 per 100 cubic feet.

Sanitary Sewer Lateral Repair Options

Public Works Staff identified five potential options to address sanitary sewer lateral repairs occurring within public R.O.W. These options include:

Option 1. No Action

No modifications would be made to current City policy on sanitary service laterals. Property owners would be responsible for maintaining sewer service laterals and no changes would be made to the existing sewer lateral pavement reimbursement program. Property owners would be eligible for reimbursement of 75%, up to a maximum amount of \$4,500, of pavement removal and replacement costs within the public R.O.W.

There would be no financial impact for this option since none of the existing City policies or programs would be modified.

Option 2. 100 % Pavement Reimbursement

The City would reimburse the full cost, up to a maximum amount of \$6,000, to the property owner for street pavement removal, replacement, and backfill for the repair of the sanitary sewer service lateral under the pavement in a City street. The property owner would still be responsible for replacing, repairing, and maintaining their sewer service lateral. Due to prevailing wage requirements, the City could not pay the contractor directly for the pavement removal and replacement costs.

The Sewer Benefit Tax would have to be increased by \$2.10 a year for a property owner who uses 7,000 gallons of water per month to cover the expense of a 100% reimbursement program for sanitary sewer lateral repairs. It is estimated that the average expense for removal and replacement of street pavement would be \$6,000. It is estimated that there would be fourteen sanitary service lateral repairs annually. The budget impact is estimated to be \$42,000 per year to increase the 75% reimbursement to 100% for a total program cost of \$84,000 annually.

Option 3. City Repairs Laterals within Public R.O.W.

The City would repair the sanitary sewer lateral within the public R.O.W. The property owner would still be responsible for maintaining their sanitary sewer service lateral. The City would repair the sanitary sewer lateral based on the following criteria:

- A sinkhole formed in the public R.O.W. as the result of a problem with the sewer lateral. Public Works staff would have to verify the sinkhole was caused by the sewer lateral.

- A back-up in the sanitary sewer lateral occurred that could not be cleared by hydro jetting, rodding, or by root cutting. Public Works staff would have to verify that the blockage could not be removed by sewer cleaning equipment.
- If televising of the sewer lateral showed that a collapse of the pipe had occurred.

Sanitary sewer lateral repairs would be point repairs limited to replacing the collapsed or plugged section of the pipe only. The City would not be responsible for replacing the entire lateral due to root intrusion. A City contractor, supervised by Public Works staff, would complete the sanitary sewer lateral repair.

The existing City ordinance regarding sanitary sewer laterals would have to be revised to state that the City was responsible for repairing laterals located within the public R.O.W. based on the circumstances described above.

The Sewer Benefit Tax would have to be increased by the same amount of \$2.10 a year for a property owner that uses 7,000 gallons of water per month as for Option 3 to cover the expense of the City making sewer lateral repairs within the public R.O.W.

Option 4. City Ownership of Sewer Laterals within Public R.O.W.

The City would assume ownership of the sanitary sewer laterals within the public R.O.W. Public Works staff estimates that there are 6,660 sanitary sewer laterals within the public R.O.W., which translates to 38 miles of pipes for the City to operate, maintain, and repair. The existing City ordinance regarding sanitary sewer laterals would have to be revised to state that the City owned the laterals within the public R.O.W.

The City would be responsible for cleaning, televising, repairing, and replacing sanitary sewer laterals within the public R.O.W. Since the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency has been including Capacity, Management, Operation, and Maintenance (CMOM) best management practices requirements for collection systems when the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits are reissued for wastewater treatment plants, all the community owned sanitary sewer infrastructure will have to be cleaned, inspected, and repaired in a proactive manner to ensure that it operates properly to minimize sanitary sewer overflows and sewer back-ups. The sanitary sewers in public R.O.W. would be City infrastructure and subject to CMOM best practices regarding cleaning, inspection and repair or replacement.

A clean-out would be required at the property line for each lateral to provide access for Public Works staff to clean and inspect the sanitary sewer laterals within the public R.O.W. The estimated cost to locate and install a clean-out at the property line would be \$1,000. Public Works would also have to purchase a hydro jetting truck and hire two additional staff to proactively clean and televise the sanitary sewer laterals within the public R.O.W.

The annual costs of the City assuming ownership of the sanitary sewer laterals in public R.O.W. are presented below in Table 1.

Table 1 – Annual Sanitary Sewer Lateral Program Costs

Description	Annual Cost
Cleanout Installation - Bond Issue	\$455,000
Repairs and Replacement	\$200,000
Operations Staff for Cleaning and Televising	\$139,000
Equipment for Cleaning and Televising	\$34,000
Total Sewer Lateral Expenses	\$828,000

The Sewer Benefit Tax would have to be increased by \$70.80 a year for a property owner who uses 7,000 gallons of water per month to cover the expense of the City assuming ownership of the sewer laterals within the public R.O.W. This would be a 65% increase in the current sewer benefit tax rate.

Option 5. Lateral Insurance

Property owners pay a monthly fee into an insurance fund pool to cover the cost of repairing their service lateral in the event of a blockage or failure. The insurance program could be administered by the City or a third party and participation could be either voluntary or required. Illinois American Water Company presently offers a sanitary sewer lateral insurance program to Urbana residents for \$9 per month. Rock Island offers a sanitary sewer lateral insurance program that the city administers for a cost of \$9 per month for property owners. (Please note that the Sewer Benefit Tax levied by Urbana is \$9.08 per month for a property owner that uses 7,000 gallons of water per month.)

Public Outreach Efforts

The Public Works Department has created an informational tri-fold brochure on sewer back-ups to be distributed to property owners experiencing sewer related problems per Council's recommendation from the January 28, 2013 Committee of the Whole Meeting. Included in the brochure is information on the City's reimbursement program for sewer lateral repairs and the emergency grant program administered by the Community Development Department Grant Management Division. Information on the cured-in-place pipe lining and pipe bursting technologies is also included in the brochure. A copy of the brochure is attached.

The Public Works Department proposes to have its sewer maintenance staff distribute the brochures whenever responding to a sewer back-up. The Public Works Department will also mail a copy of the brochure to all properties that submit a Right-of-Way permit application for sewer excavation. The Public Works Department will provide copies of the brochure to the City Plumbing Inspector to be distributed to property owners with sewer related plumbing issues. The brochure will be posted on the City's website for the public to access.

Recommended Action

The Public Works Department requests guidance from Council on which option to pursue regarding sanitary sewer lateral repairs within the public right-of-way.

Attachments: Appendix A – Central Illinois Agency Survey Results
Appendix B- Illinois Communities with Sewer Lateral Ownership in R.O.W. Survey Results
Tri-Fold Brochure on Sewer Back-Ups

APPENDIX A - CENTRAL ILLINOIS AGENCY SURVEY RESULTS

Name of Municipality	Survey Date	Survey Participant Name	Title or Position	Who owns the sewer lateral from the building to the public right-of-way line?	Who owns the sewer lateral from the public right-of-way line to the public sewer?	Who owns the wye or break-in connection for the sewer lateral?	How was ownership of sewer laterals established
Village of Rantoul	4/16/2013	Pete Passarelli	Assistant City Engineer	Property Owner	Property Owner	Property Owner	Ordinance
Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District	4/16/2013	Mark Radi	District Engineer	Property Owner	Property Owner	Property Owner	Ordinance
City of Bloomington	4/16/2013	Kevin Kothe	City Engineer	Property Owner	Property Owner	Property Owner	Ordinance
City of Champaign	4/15/2013	Eleanor Blackmon	Assistant City Engineer	Property Owner	Property Owner	Property Owner	Ordinance; Historic Policy
City of Decatur	4/15/2013	Mary Cave, PE	Civil Engineer II	Property Owner	Property Owner	Property Owner	Ordinance
Village of Forsyth	4/8/2013	Larry Coloni	Public Works Director	Property Owner	Property Owner	Property Owner	Resolution
Village of Savoy	3/29/2013	Brent Maue	PW Director	Property Owner	Property Owner	Property Owner	Ordinance
City of Danville	3/28/2013	Eric Childers	Engineer III	Property Owner	Property Owner	Property Owner	Historic Policy
City of Charleston	3/28/2013	Curt Buescher	Director of Public Works	Property Owner	Property Owner	Property Owner	Ordinance; Historic Policy
City of Springfield	3/26/2013	John Higginbotham	Sewer Engineer	Property Owner	Property Owner	Property Owner	Historic Policy
Normal	3/26/2013	Gene Brown	Town Engineer	Property Owner	Property Owner	City, Town, or Village	Ordinance
City of Peoria	3/26/2013	Jeff Smith	City Engineer	Property Owner	Property Owner	City, Town, or Village	Ordinance

APPENDIX A - CENTRAL ILLINOIS AGENCY SURVEY RESULTS

Name of Municipality	Do you clean sewer laterals?	Do you televise sewer laterals?	Do you repair sewer laterals?	Where do you repair sewer laterals at?	Who repairs the sewer lateral within public right-of-way?	Do you reimburse the property owner for the sewer lateral repairs with public right-of-way?	Please detail any full or partial reimbursement you offer for sewer lateral repairs?
Village of Rantoul	No	No	No		Property owner/contractor	No	
Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District	No	No	No		Property owner/contractor	No	
City of Bloomington	No	No	No		Property owner/contractor	No	
City of Champaign	No	No	No		Property owner/contractor	Yes - they receive partial reimbursement for the repair	We have exceptions to the above maint, will send by e-mail. Also will detail reimbursement by e-mail.
City of Decatur	No	No	No		Property owner/contractor	No	If a service lateral is in need of repair and is posing a public health threat, the City, at times, will repair the lateral using a Contractor and then place on a lien on the property until the repair has been paid for.
Village of Forsyth	No	No	No		Property owner/contractor	No	
Village of Savoy	No	No	No		Property owner/contractor	No	We are actually in the process of coming up with a policy to pay for 50% of pavement patching costs for laterals under publicly owned streets.
City of Danville	No	No	No		Property owner/contractor	Yes - they receive partial reimbursement for the repair	City crews will remove any pavement involved and replace after repair.
City of Charleston	No	No	No		Property owner/contractor	No	
City of Springfield	No	No	No		Property owner/contractor	Yes - they receive full reimbursement for the repair	We pay for repairs to the private lateral if the repair is performed in the right of way. The owner is responsible for having the damaged location dug up. Someone from the City will inspect the damage after it is dug up and authorize it for reimbursement. In essence the owner has to prove the problem with the lateral exists in the right of way before we will commit to paying for it. It is still a private lateral and maintenance of the lateral is still the responsibility of the resident. The City simply reimburses for the repair.
Normal	No	No	Yes; No	In public right-of-way including under streets and	City staff; City contractor; Property owner/contractor	No; Yes - they receive partial reimbursement for the repair	
City of Peoria	No	No	No		Property owner/contractor	Yes - they receive partial reimbursement for the repair	100% of flowable backfill under the roadway. 50% up to \$3500.00 of remaining costs.

APPENDIX B - ILLINOIS COMMUNITIES WITH SEWER LATERAL OWNESHIP IN R.O.W. SURVEY RESULTS

Name of Municipality	Survey Date	Survey Participant Name	Title or Position	Who owns the sewer lateral from the building to the public right-of-way line?	Who owns the sewer lateral from the public right-of-way line to the public sewer?	Who owns the wye or break-in connection for the sewer lateral?	How was ownership of sewer laterals established	What is your annual sewer bill or fee for a typical residential customer?	Does your fee include treatment costs?	Do you charge a separate fee for lateral maintenance?	If yes, what is the annual lateral maintenance fee? (e.g. \$/cf, \$gal, \$/month)
Rock Island	4/15/2013			Property Owner	Property Owner	Property Owner	Ordinance	\$3.41/cf on 1st 15,000 cf and \$2.19/cf over 15,000 cf	Yes	Yes	\$108/yr on subscription program
Carbondale	4/15/2013	Sean Henry	Public Works Director	Property Owner	City, Town, or Village	City, Town, or Village	Ordinance; Historic Policy	\$4.74/1000 gal + \$3.97 customer charge	Yes	No	
Galesburg	4/8/2013	Larry Cox	Public Works Director	Property Owner	Property Owner	City, Town, or Village	Ordinance	\$1.683 / CCF + \$5.25 / quarter	No	No	
Village of Schaumburg	4/2/2013	Brian Wagner	Superintendent-Utilities	Property Owner	City, Town, or Village	City, Town, or Village	Ordinance	\$1.48 per thousand	No	No	
Village of Addison	3/28/2013	Mitch Patterson	Director of Public Works	Property Owner	City, Town, or Village	City, Town, or Village	Ordinance; Historic Policy	\$5.43 Sewer & \$5.27 Water - per 1,000	Yes	No	

APPENDIX B - ILLINOIS COMMUNITIES WITH SEWER LATERAL OWNESHIP IN R.O.W. SURVEY RESULTS

Name of Municipality	How many laterals do you maintain?	What year did you start lateral maintenance?	Do you require a clean-out at the property line for access purposes?	Who installs or pays for clean-out at property line	How many clean-outs do you have at the property line?	Do you clean sewer laterals?	How often do you clean sewer laterals? (e.g. 5 year cycle)	Do you televise sewer laterals?	How often do you televise sewer laterals? (e.g. 10 year cycle)	Do you repair or replace sewer laterals?	Where do you repair sewer laterals at?
Rock Island	2358	2006	No		N/A	No	repair only subscription program	No	N/A	Yes	In public right-of-way including under streets and sidewalk; On private property outside the public right-of-way; In City easements
Carbondale	9000 +/- (in ROW only)	always have	Yes	Property Owner	4500 +/-	Yes	only as requested, owner pays if not on ROW	Yes	only as requested, owner pays if not on ROW	Yes	In public right-of-way including under streets and sidewalk; In City easements
Galesburg	0		Yes	Property Owner	?	No		No		No	
Village of Schaumburg	24,000		Yes	City, Town, or Village	~10,000	Yes	When requested	Yes	When requested	Yes	In public right-of-way including under streets and sidewalk
Village of Addison	All... Approx 10,000 - 12,000 in ROW.	Approx. 1927	No	City, Town, or Village	Approx 750 - 800	Yes	Semi annual for root intrusion or as required	Yes	Prior and/or post to rodding if possible	Yes	In public right-of-way including under streets and sidewalk; In City easements

APPENDIX B - ILLINOIS COMMUNITIES WITH SEWER LATERAL OWNESHIP IN R.O.W. SURVEY RESULTS

Name of Municipality	Who repairs the sewer lateral within public right-of-way?	Do you reimburse the property owner for the sewer lateral repairs with public right-of-way?	Please detail any full or partial reimbursement you offer for sewer lateral repairs?	Under what circumstances do you replace laterals?	Other Description	Have you had any disputes with property owners regarding the location of the problem in the lateral or in how the lateral was repaired? How were these disputes resolved?	Did you add staff to take on lateral maintenance?	How many staff did you add?	Did you acquire additional equipment to take on lateral maintenance?	What additional equipment did you add?
Rock Island	City staff; City contractor; Property owner/contractor	No		Structural pipe failure (e.g. broken or collapsed pipe)		yes. varied resolution.	No		No	
Carbondale	City staff	No		Structural pipe failure (e.g. broken or collapsed pipe); Root infestation		Yes, primarily via using the City Code (ordinance) to determine the line of responsibility	No	we do not maintain the "private" portion of the lateral	No	
Galesburg	Property owner/contractor	No				The City and the Sanitary District have disputes because the District will not provide any sewer lateral assistance to property owners	No			N/A
Village of Schaumburg	City staff	No	Village does work	Structural pipe failure (e.g. broken or collapsed pipe)		The Village will do whatever it takes to make it right.	No		No	
Village of Addison	City staff	No	Public Works makes repairs/replacement within easement ROW.	Structural pipe failure (e.g. broken or collapsed pipe); Root infestation; Other (Please describe)	We replace/repair as needed in easement/ROW	Yes, disputes resolved using lateral camera to identify location and issue.	No	We have LOST staff due to economy!	Yes	Lateral camera, "Vac-a-Tee" clean out saddles, rodding machine with various sizes of root cutters,

What to do if you have a back-up

The City will determine whether your slow drainage or back-up is being caused by a condition in the City-owned sewers or the lateral sewer line which runs from your house to the City's sewer line. If the blockage is in your lateral sewer line then you will need to contact a plumber or sewer cleaning contractor to remove the blockage. Your plumber or sewer cleaning contractor may need to run a camera through your lateral sewer to identify the location and nature of the blockage. Ask for a CD or DVD of what the camera is recording. If your plumber or sewer cleaning contractor cannot provide that, then be present at the time when the camera is run through your lateral sewer. City Staff will be happy to review the video recording with you to verify any recommendations made by your plumber or sewer cleaning contractor.

A few things to remember if *any sewer repair or replacement work is recommended...*

ALWAYS get two or more estimates of repair or replacement work needed to be done from other plumbers or contractors. You are not obligated to hire the plumber or sewer cleaning contractor that cleaned or televised your sewer lateral to do any repair or replacement work. The cost of work can vary significantly between contractors.

Ask questions - Understand what they are doing and why. Still not clear? Call the Engineering Division at 384-2342.

Know your options - Consider pipe bursting and cured-in-place pipe lining are all possible cost effective alternatives to open trench cutting depending on your situation. Information on these options is available at http://urbanaillinois.us/Sewer_Repairs

Be aware of the scope of work needed to be done and make sure any contract you sign adequately describes all the work to be done.

Sewer Repair Funding



Urbana has two programs to assist property owners with the cost of sewer repairs.

1. **Pavement Reimbursement Program-**

All properties are eligible and there are no income limits for the program. The City will reimburse a property owner 75% (up to a maximum reimbursement of \$4,500) of the cost for pavement removal and replacement of city streets, alleys, and sidewalks. Information on the program and application forms are available at

http://urbanaillinois.us/Sewer_Repairs

2. **Emergency Grant Program-**

This program is available to income qualifying homeowners for emergency home repairs including sewer laterals. Maximum funding per household through the emergency grant program is \$5,000. For additional information on the emergency grant program see

<http://urbanaillinois.us/residents/grant-funding/home-improvement-programs>

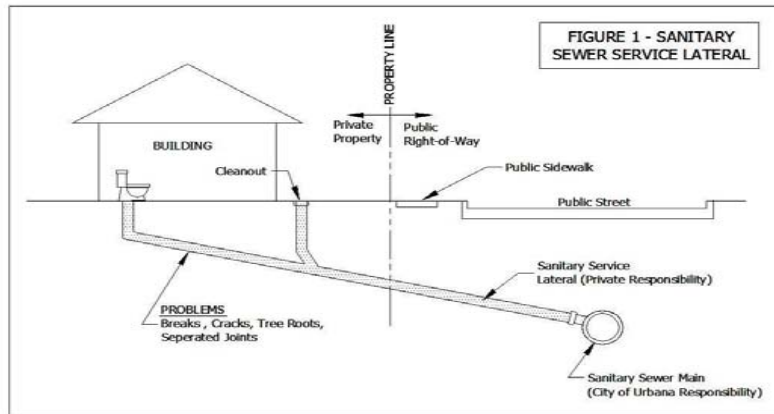
What To Do If You Have a Sewer Back-up



*City of Urbana
Public Works*



Plumbing Fixtures Not Draining? Call Us First!



What's The Problem?

Sewer back-ups can be caused by a variety of reasons including collapsed pipes, tree roots, storm water infiltration, grease, paper products and other debris. Any of these conditions can result in blocked or slowly draining pipes. If you have reoccurring problems with tree roots or grease you might want to consider a long term maintenance plan utilizing a sewer cleaning contractor.

Basement flooding? Our overhead sewer program provides funding to reduce back-ups from the City owned sewer main. For additional information on the City's overhead sewer program please see http://www.urbanaininois.us/Sewer_Back-Ups.

Think Safety First!

At the first sign of a sewer back-up stop using plumbing fixtures and appliances that drain to the sewer. If water is collecting in any part of the home including the basement, safely turn off electricity before entering affected areas. However, if turning off the electricity requires you to walk in water covered areas do not turn off the electricity but contact a plumber. If you enter flooded areas do so with extreme caution. Avoid direct contact with sewage and contaminated items. Be careful not to track contaminants to other areas of your home.

Clean Up Safely!

Use gloves and boots when cleaning contaminated surfaces and be wary of porous materials such as dry-wall and carpet. Consider consulting a professional water damage service.

Is water coming back up through your drains? Call us first!

Monday - Friday 7:30am - 5:00pm 217-384-2342

After Normal Work Hours 217-384-2320
(Police Department Non-Emergency Line)

Helpful Links

http://www.urbanaininois.us/Sewer_Back-Ups

http://urbanaininois.us/Sewer_Repairs

Always remember... You can call us if you have any questions at any point in the process; before, during or after the work is finished.

Contact us at:

City of Urbana

Public Works Department

Engineering Division

706 S Glover Ave

Urbana, Illinois 61802

Phone: 217-384-2342