

How Property Owners Can Help

- Inspect the gutters on your home or business to see if the downspout(s) connect to a sanitary sewer line. If the gutters are connected, have them disconnected. The runoff water from the roof can contribute to storm sewer overflow.
- If the gutter in front of your property becomes clogged with leaves or debris, clear it out. Such efforts can prevent a significant amount of run-off from entering the storm sewer system and ending up in local creeks and lakes.
- Sump pump systems are designed to capture surface or ground water that enters basements or crawl spaces and pump it away from the house. Make sure the basement sump pump does not connect to your sewage drain pipes, or to a sink or floor drain in your basement. The water from these pumps can overload the sanitary sewer causing an overflow of raw sewage into a street, stream, or someone else's basement. If you have a sump pump, make sure the **discharge is directed outside your house and NOT into the sanitary sewer system**. That's called a cross connection, is a leading cause of **Inflow & Infiltration**, and results in higher sanitary sewer charges.
- Avoid pouring **grease** down your sink. When the grease cools in the sewer line it can form clogs and blockages, which then can cause the sanitary sewer to overflow or back up in buildings. Grease can also contribute to restricted flow in your home plumbing and service laterals, **resulting in costly repairs**.
- Avoid planting trees and shrubs above or near the service lateral that runs from your home to the street. Roots can grow into the pipes and clog sewers, causing them to back up and overflow.
- Do not flush disposable wipes down the toilet or drain, even if the labeling says they are "flushable".
- If you've had a history of backups, a routine sewer cleaning is recommended. In any case, a sewer check-up once every two years doesn't hurt.
- You can also help by maintaining healthy lawns and not leaving debris or possible pollutants on lawns, driveways, or streets.