

Joseph Florio
Mayor



Manuel Figureido
Comm. of Pub. Works
Committee member

WELCOME TO THE TOWNSHIP OF UNION DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS WEBSITE

Sergio P. Panunzio CPWM, CPM.
Superintendent

Back-ups

A **backup** typically occurs in a home's plumbing system or lateral and will not cause damage if you discontinue using the plumbing fixture(s) until the system is cleared. Most slow moving drains, toilets, or backups can be remedied with drain cleaners or a plunger. If the backup continues, contact the [Township of Union Department of Public Works at \(908\) 686 1922](tel:9086861922).

Employees of the Sewer Division will inspect the system to determine if a blockage has occurred within the Township street line. If this is the case, the line will be flushed and the blockage should abate. If the blockage is not in the street line, a plumbing service will need to be called to clear your house line.

A **backflow** is much less common and occurs when water or materials come up through a drain, toilet, or other fixture when the home's plumbing system is not being used. This may indicate that the city main is blocked and wastewater is backing up into your lateral line and home.

Monday Friday 8:00am – 4:30pm
908-686-1922
After hours & holiday (24Hrs) 908- 851-5000

Appropriate personnel will be dispatched to investigate and remedy any problem. D.P.W. personnel will advise and assist you if a backflow occurs due to an obstruction originating off the property. **DUE TO INSURANCE REGULATIONS OUR PERSONNEL WILL NOT PERFORM ANY WORK INSIDE OR ON YOUR PROPERTY.**

Sewer Back Up

A Sewer backup can create a stressful and emotional situation for the Homeowner/renter. In some cases, it may cause health and safety concerns as well as significant property loss. A proper response to a sewer backup can greatly minimize property damage and diminish the threat of illness.

What causes a sewer backup?

Sanitary sewer overflows can be caused by a number of factors. They usually involve sewer pipe blockages in either main sewer lines or service laterals (lines between buildings and the main line). Causes may include pipe breaks or cracks due to tree roots, system deterioration, insufficient system capacity due to residential or commercial growth, or construction mishaps. In home and office plumbing systems, the main cause is accumulation of grease, tree roots, hair, or solid materials, such as disposable diapers or sanitary napkins that are too large for wastewater pipes to handle. Such materials may cause major backups



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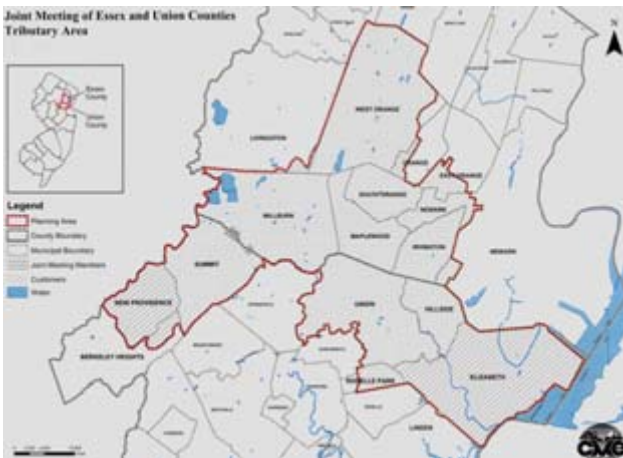
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in Township's lines as well as in residents' lateral lines. A frequent cause of water stoppages within the Township's system, however, is vandalism. Leaves, sticks, rocks, bricks and trash have been found stuffed down manholes. We encourage you to report observations of any such activity.

Lateral vs. Main

What is a sewer lateral? A sewer lateral or house lateral is the pipeline between the Township sanitary sewers main, usually located in the street, and the building. The sewer lateral is owned and maintained by the property owner including any part, which may extend into the street or public right of way. Most often, the cause of a backup in your lateral is from items that the line is not meant to handle; such as toys, underwear, towels, children diapers, paper products (other than toilet paper) keys and even false teeth. To avoid flushing these items, remember to close the toilet lid. What you flush down your toilet may not affect you, but it might cause problems for your neighbors! Another possible cause would be roots in your lateral. The lateral is the responsibility of the owner of the property from the house to the street.

Trunk Line



A sewer Trunk Line is the pipeline between the Township sanitary sewer main, and the line that brings sewerage to the plant. The trunk line is owned and maintained by the Joint Meeting of Essex and Union County, including any part, which may extend into the street or public right of way.

If you reside near a trunk line, the cause of a backup in the township's line is caused by a high flow of sewage during heavy rains.

TRUNK LINE BACKUP

Whenever a "Trunk Line" is running to capacity (full) the township's sewer lines have nowhere to bring the sewage to and therefore backup. More often, this event causes sewage to back up into the basement, through toilets, slop sinks and drains. The Department of Public Works Sewer Division is limited as to what it can do to alleviate the problem. Once the Trunk Lines start running again, the sewage in your basement will begin to recede. Follow the instructions under "**What should I do if sewage backs up into my home**"

How could a sewer backup affect me? If the backup occurs in a Township maintained line, the wastewater will normally overflow out of the lowest possible opening. In some homes—especially those with basements, or where the lowest level is even with the sewer lines—the overflowing wastewater may exit through the home's lower drains and toilets.