



MORA MUNICIPAL UTILITIES Sewer Backups

What You Should Know

Occasionally a blockage in a sewer line will result in a backup of sanitary sewage into a private home. If you experience a backup, immediately contact Mora Municipal Utilities (MMU). The following information will answer the basic questions about what to do if you experience a backup and how to clean up properly.

INSURANCE

The City of Mora/MMU is not automatically responsible when a sewer backup occurs. There are many reasons for backups which the City cannot control. For example, people dumping inappropriate items such as grease, diapers or wipes into the system can create a blockage. Tree roots can grow into and obstruct the lines as well. Generally, the City/MMU is responsible only if it was negligent in maintaining the sewer lines. Sometimes your homeowners' insurance will pay for sewer backups. Not all policies have this coverage and you should check with your agent. If you feel damage occurred as a direct result of the City's/MMU's negligence, you may file an insurance claim by calling the City's insurance agent.

CLEAN UP

For large clean ups, you could consider calling a cleaning service. Your insurance carrier might have suggestions on which service to use or you can search online. For smaller backups you can clean yourself try using a solution of two tablespoons chlorine bleach and one gallon of water. To reduce health hazards, thoroughly clean the areas affected by the backup as soon as possible. The Minnesota Department of Health suggests the following:

- Use outside air to dry your home.
- Open windows and doors and use an exhaust fan to remove moisture from the house.
- If available, use a room dehumidifier. Remember to empty often.
- If your basement is flooded, pump the water in stages – about one-third per day. Make sure the level of the floodwater outside is below the level of the basement floor. If not, do not pump the basement all at once because the saturated soil could cause the basement walls to collapse.
- Wear a mask to prevent inhaling contaminated dust, especially if you have allergies. Consult your physician if you have questions.
- Open, clean, decontaminate, and thoroughly dry cavities in walls, floors and ceilings.
- Release any water or mud that has been trapped in walls, ceilings or flood cavities.
- Allow walls to dry from the inside out.
- Remove moisture and debris from all surfaces and get surface materials dry within 24-48 hours.
- Remove all interior wall furnishing materials and insulation.
- Throw away any wet insulation, moist plaster, wallboard and paneling.
- If you think you might have materials containing asbestos in your home, call the Minnesota Department of Health at 651-201-5000.
- If any materials are still wet or moist after 24-48 hours, you should assume they have mold growing on them.

REMINDER

Property owners are responsible for the maintenance, repair and cleaning of the service line from the house to the City main line. For more information on clean ups, visit the Minnesota Department of Health's website at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/>.

