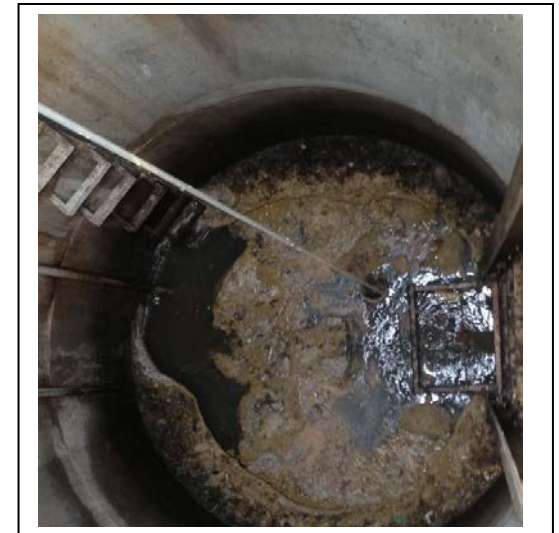


City of Grinnell

Message from the
Wastewater Treatment
Plant Personnel on:
**How to Avoid Backups in
your Basement**



The City is responsible for cleaning the City's main lines; however, homeowners are responsible for maintaining their lateral sewers which connect from your home to the City's main lines in the streets or City Right of Ways.



Sewer Blockage "How to Avoid Backups in Your Basement"

Steps you can do to help prevent sewer blockage and to keep your plumbing bills down:



Just because the package says "FLUSHABLE" doesn't mean it's true. Many items marketed as disposable and/or flushable do not degrade like toilet paper, and they wind up clogging pipes, tangling in our lift station pumps and causing messy sewer backups.

Sewage blockage in the sewer line can cause back up through floor drains and toilets at the lowest point in your home or business. This will continue until the blockage is removed or until sewage is no longer entering the sewer line.

Our sewers are designed to dispose of very specific things. Using your toilet for disposal of many modern products will often result in blockages. The drains that connect your home to the main sewer are only big enough to carry water, toilet paper and human waste - often no wider than 4 inches.

- Do not flush paper products such as facial tissue, paper towels, baby wipes, handy wipes, disposable towels, diapers, napkins, or tampons. The only truly flushable paper product is toilet paper. Other products might say they're flushable but can still cause sewer blockage.
- Do not use the garbage disposal to shred solid materials into finer pieces because this doesn't liquefy them and can get clogged in the sewage system. Some examples of kitchen solids are watermelon rinds, potato peels, corn kernels, eggshells, and chicken bones.
- All sink, tub, and floor drains should be fitted with baskets or strainers to catch debris. Inspect them often, and clear them regularly.
- In the bathroom, keep sinks with pop-up stoppers clog-free by routinely cleaning out the hair and other material that collects in them. Do not flush dental floss.
- Do not pour cooking grease and oil down your drains. Dispose of grease with your trash.
- Most of the time, sewer backups are due to tree roots that grow into and clog the lines as they seek the water inside the pipe. If you have chronic root problems, one possible solution is the removal of trees or plants that may be the culprits.
- Identify where the cleanouts (access point) to your sewer line are and keep them accessible in case a plumber needs to access them.

What not to flush:

- Vitamins, medicines
Or other pharmaceuticals
- Diapers (cloth, disposable, or "flushable")
- Facial tissues
- Baby wipes, disinfectant wipes, moist wipes, etc.
- Toilet bowl scrub pads
- Swiffer products
- Napkins (paper or cloth), paper towels
- Dental floss
- Fats, oils and greases
- Sanitary napkins, tampons, condoms or any non-organic material
- Wash cloths, towels, rags, Underwear (any cloth item)
- Plastic wrappers or packaging