

AFTER THE SEWER BACKUP

tips for homeowners

Reduce the Risk

During periods of extreme rainfall, infiltration and flooding can cause sewage from sanitary sewer lines to back up into homes and businesses. These backups not only cause damage that is difficult and expensive to repair, but also create health hazards.

Responding properly to a sanitary sewer backup can minimize negative health effects and property damage.

Cause of Backup

Determine if the backup is localized to your home or is being experienced throughout the neighborhood by talking to your neighbors. If the backup is being experienced throughout the neighborhood contact the Public Works Department immediately (402-441-7961). If the problem is in your lateral line, contact a plumber.

For more information, go to lincoln.ne.gov keyword: wastewater.

If There is a Sewage Backup

- Keep people and pets away from the affected area
- Turn off electrical power to the area if there are any appliances or fixtures that are coming in contact with standing water
- Identify if the backup is localized to your home or is being experienced throughout the neighborhood by talking to your neighbors
- Do not flush toilets and turn off any running water
- Call the Public Works Department (402-441-7961)
- Determine whether you or a professional will clean up the area



Source: macombcountyfloodrestoration.com



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Insurance

Contact your insurance provider to confirm whether or not your homeowner's or renter's insurance policy will cover damages related to sewage backups. Consider adding additional coverage if it is not currently in your insurance policy. (TIP: take photographs of the spill and damages to take an inventory of losses)

Consult a professional

You should hire a professional water damage or restoration company if:

- The contamination is too large for you to handle
- Spill has been in place for 24 hours or longer
- HVAC system is contaminated
- You or other occupants have increased vulnerabilities (asthmatic, elderly, compromised immune system, infants)

SEWAGE SPILL CLEAN UP ADVICE

Protect Yourself

- Wear rubber gloves, eye protection, rubber boots, and impervious coveralls
- Do not directly touch sewage or sewage contaminated materials such as carpets, clothing, or furniture
- Wash your hands frequently; wash and disinfect clothing, gloves and boots that are to be re-used
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, ears, nor any open cuts when working around sewage
- Do not eat, drink, chew gum, apply lip balm or lipstick while cleaning up sewage
- If you accidentally get wet or touch sewage, stop and bathe.
- Clean and sanitize clothing, equipment, tools that come into contact with sewage materials, or if appropriate, discard those materials

First Steps

- Remove non-salvageable and salvageable contents from the affected area
- Prevent cross-contamination:
 - Close doors between the contaminated area and other rooms
 - Seal HVAC air intake or outlet registers during the cleaning and drying
 - Use negative air (fans blowing out through one or more windows) to keep air pressure in the contaminated area lower than the rest of the building to prevent contaminated dust from being blown to other areas
- Demolition & removal of contaminated materials: remove any contaminated drywall, carpeting, carpet padding, paneling, building insulation or similar materials in the affected area

Use Caution

Sewage spills can contain bacteria, fungi, parasites, and viruses that can cause serious illness or disease. Unless you are wearing appropriate safety gear, do not enter contaminated areas. Toxic, flammable, asphyxiating or even explosive gases including methane and hydrogen sulfide may be present.

What can be salvaged?

Hard-surfaced furniture, dishes, plastic items

Clothing, sheets, towels, blankets and similar bedding may also be salvageable by thorough cleaning.

What can not be salvaged?

Porous material (cardboard, paper, books, cloth) upholstered furniture, mattresses, stuffed animals. These materials can become reservoirs for the growth of microorganisms.

For more information, go to lincoln.ne.gov keyword: wastewater. Or visit http://inspectapedia.com/hazmat/Sewage_Cleanup_Procedures.php