

---

---

## What Can Residents Do To Prevent Sewer Backups?

✓ **U**se household chemicals until chemical container is completely empty. Recycle empty container appropriately.

✗ **D**o not flush household chemicals down the toilet or pour down the drain.

*Household chemicals can kill “good” bacteria used for sewage treatment.*

✓ **C**hoose and plant trees carefully.

✗ **D**o not plant trees with shallow, spreading root systems near your lateral.

*Tree roots seek water sources, such as cracked sewer lines. Once the roots have penetrated the line, they can create a dense mat and trap materials.*

---

---

---

---

## Resident Responsibilities

**R**esidents are responsible for the care and maintenance of the lateral line up to its connection with the municipal sewer main.

### Who do Residents Contact if a Sewer Backup Occurs?

**R**esidents should contact the wastewater plant at 978-671-0956 immediately if a backup occurs.

### For other Department of Public Works Questions on:

**D**rinking Water: ..... 978-671-0957

**W**ater / Sewer bills: ..... 978-671-0954

**T**rash / Recyclables: ..... 978-436-9178

**S**now removal / Road issues: .... 978-671-0951

**DPW** administration: ..... 978-671-0313

---

---



---

---

# Preventing Sewer Backups In Your Home

## A Guide for Billerica Residents

---

---

**Billerica Wastewater Treatment Plant  
70 Letchworth Avenue  
Billerica, MA 01862  
(978) 671-0956**

---

---

## How Does the Sewer System Work?

### How Do Sewer Backups Occur?

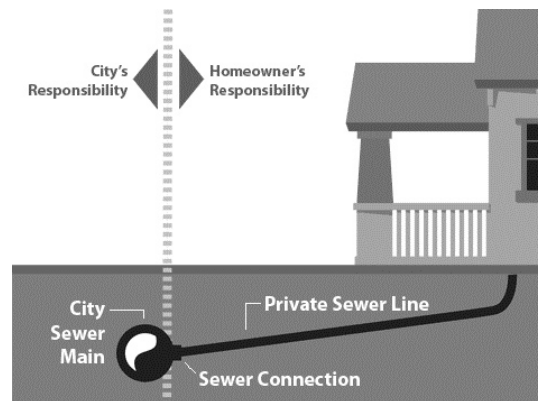
**D**uring Periods of heavy rain, the volume of wastewater that flows to a sewage treatment plant can exceed the capacity of the pipes to the plant.

**W**astewater can also back up into your home when there is a blockage in your lateral (private) or public sewer line.

**S**ewage contains bacteria, viruses and other organisms that can cause illness.

**T**his brochure will provide you with information regarding sanitary sewer systems and what you can do as a resident to prevent sewer backups in your home.

**H**omes connected to the municipal sewer system contain a service lateral line, or private sewer line, that connects to the municipal sewer main.



**W**aste travels from your home's plumbing system through the lateral to the municipal sewer main. Waste then travels through the municipal sewer lines to a wastewater treatment facility where the waste is properly managed.

## What Can Residents Do To Prevent Sewer Backups?

- ✓ **P**our grease, fats and oils into a heat-resistant container and dispose of it in the garbage (after it cools).
- ✗ **D**o not pour grease down the drain.
- ✓ **D**ispose of paper products and household trash with solid waste (trash).
- ✗ **D**o not flush diapers down your toilet.
- ✓ **D**ispose of food scraps in the garbage with solid waste.
- ✗ **D**o not use the toilet as a wastebasket.

*These items can block sewer lines resulting in a backup into your home.*

---

---