

Preventing Sewage Back-Up

When a sewer line is restricted or plugged, the continual flow of sewage behind a plug has no where to go and will therefore continue its flow into open pipes or drains at low levels in homes. This may result in a sewage back-up that enters basements through toilets, bath tubs, floor drains, showers, and sinks.

Reasons of sewage back-ups include sewer lines that may have deteriorated or collapsed; tree roots invading lines, especially from older or larger trees; or disposal of items household items that are *not disposable* (diapers, paper towels, sharps, etc.) The main reason for sewage back-up, however, is improper disposal of fats, oils and greases. These are particularly the majority of sewer blockages that cause sewage back-ups in Wheeling. Fats, oils and greases include:

Butter or margarine; any cooking oil; shortening or lard; meat fat/greases/juices; sauces with grease, butter or oils; food scraps with grease, butter or oil.

Residents can take a few simple steps to eliminate or stop sewage back-up from occurring in their homes. These steps include:

- Pour cooking oils and grease or fats in a container and dispose of it in the garbage.
- Place meat and greasy food scraps in the garbage, not in garbage disposals. This can contribute to blockages.
- Wipe pots and dishes with a used paper towel or napkin to remove grease.
- Most importantly: grease goes in the garbage, not in your sink or garbage disposal .
- Avoid flushing non-disposable items in toilets.

If residents have a question or concern regarding sewage back-up, please contact the Village of Wheeling Public Works Department at 847-279-6900.