

TOWN OF NORTH BRANFORD SANITARY SEWER BACKUP POLICY

The Water Pollution Control Authority shall strive to keep the Town's sanitary sewer lines and pump stations in good working condition. Routine maintenance shall be performed to insure that the system is in good working condition and provides reliable service to Town residents and businesses. However, because a sewer is not a closed system, many items may be discharged into the sewer which could clog the system resulting in a sewer backup. The buildup of grease from homes and restaurants, disposable diapers and sanitary napkins are just some of the common items that may cause a blockage and back up wastewater in both property owners' sewer laterals and Town sewer lines.

When a blockage occurs in the Town's sewer mains, wastewater will typically overflow from the lowest opening, which is usually a manhole. However, if the lowest level of a home or business is below ground level, wastewater may back up through the sewer lateral and overflow into the structure from the lowest plumbing fixture, such as a toilet or household drain.

To limit the possibility of sanitary sewage backups, all persons discharging wastewater to the Town of North Branford sanitary sewer system should not discharge any item which can solidify and accumulate in Town sewer mains and sewer laterals into any plumbing fixture connected to the Town sanitary sewer system, including but not limited to disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, paper towels, fats, oil and grease. Properties with below grade fixtures should investigate the need to install a backflow valve on the lowest drain line(s) that discharges to the Town sanitary sewer system, and install a backflow valve if required by the International plumbing code. This type of valve allows wastewater to discharge from the property but prevents flow from entering the structure from the Town sewer line.

While the Town of North Branford shall make every effort to prevent sanitary sewer backups in the sewer system before they occur, backups may still occur. If a sanitary sewer backup does occur and results in damages to real or personal property the Town will not assume financial responsibility for damages resulting from the sewage backups, since most blockages occur due to conditions beyond the Town's control.

The Town strongly urges property owners to check their insurance policy to determine if damages related to sewage backups or water damages are covered. This type of coverage may be an optional coverage and can generally be added to a policy if requested. The cost for this optional coverage is inexpensive, and it is advised that property owners with below grade fixtures investigate this coverage.

If a backup occurs, property owners should call the Police Dispatcher at (203) 484- 2703 to report the problem. Town personnel will check for blockages in the sewer main. If the blockage is found in the sewer main it will be immediately cleared. If the sewer main is not blocked, you will be advised to call a plumbing or sewer contractor to check your lateral line. Maintenance and repair of the lateral line is the property owners' responsibility from the property to the main sewer line.

In either case, to minimize property damage, immediately close all drain openings with stoppers or plugs. Keep in mind that ceramic plumbing fixtures are fragile. Tub, sink and floor drains may need additional weight to keep them sealed. Do not run any water down your drains until the blockage has been cleared.

Adopted by the North Branford Water Pollution Control Authority on February 19, 2008