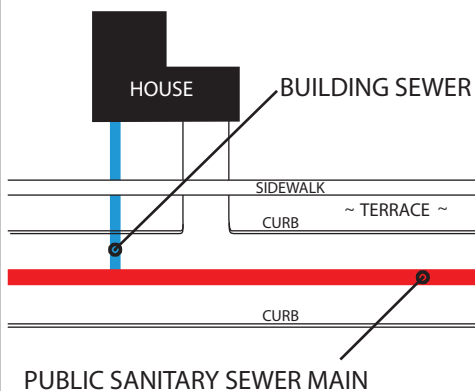


## SEWER MAINTENANCE

**CITY ENGINEERING DIVISION  
1602 EMIL STREET  
MADISON, WI 53713**

### If your sewer backs up:

1. Call the City Engineering Division's Sewer Maintenance Section at 266-4430. Personnel are available 7:30 A.M. to 11:00 P.M. (Mon - Fri) and 9:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M. (Sat - Sun). This phone will be answered by the water utility dispatcher after 11:00 P.M. or when assisting sewer maintenance operations.
2. The City Engineering Division's sewer maintenance crews will first check the public sewer main. If the public main is operating normally, this is an indication that your private building sewer is the cause of the back-up. The emergency crew will immediately attempt to notify the property owner or the resident of this fact.



Para la interpretación en Español de este folleto, favor de comunicarse al 266-4430.

3. If a blockage in the private building sewer is the cause of the sewer back-up, it is the responsibility of the property owner to clear the blockage. (The private building sewer extends from the interior plumbing of the building to where the pipe connects to the public sewer main, most frequently located at the center of the street.) There are various private firms listed under "Sewer Cleaners" in the yellow pages who are equipped to remove blockage from your private building sewer.

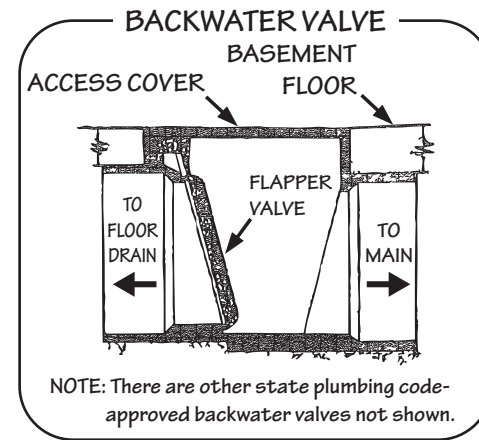
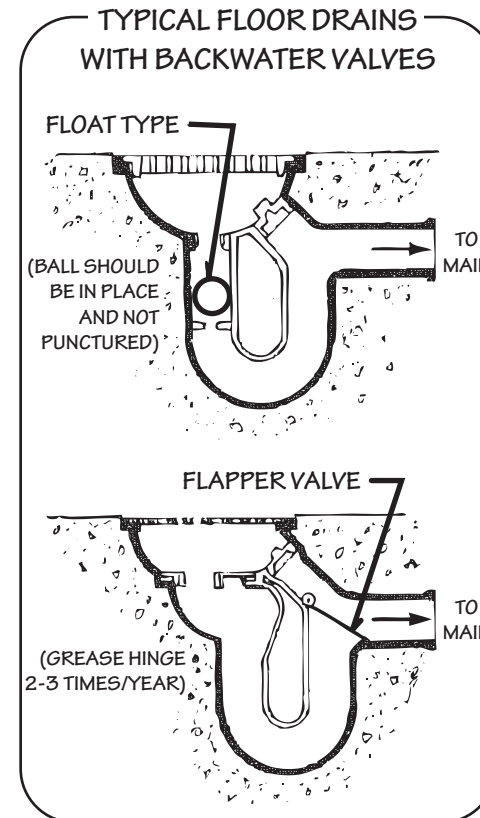
Residents who have experience in these matters may want to investigate renting equipment to clear the blockage themselves.

4. In the event that any of these actions are not successful in removing the blockage from the private building sewer, it is possible that the private building sewer has collapsed. The property owner or resident is urged to again contact the City Engineering Division's Sewer Maintenance Section to determine what further measures may be undertaken to re-establish the sewer service. In some instances the entire sewer lateral within the right-of-way may have to be replaced. The property owner may request the city to make the necessary repair(s). If a contractor is used, the property owner is responsible to pay the contractor directly for his services. If you, as a property owner, request the city to make the repairs, the city will decide how much repair is necessary to provide you with a functional building sewer and will bill the actual charges directly to you. The maximum charge for this service is adjusted annually for inflation increases. The 2009 rate is \$4,261.51.

### How to prevent sewer back-up:

For over 50 years the plumbing code has generally required a back water valve to be included as a part of the floor drain. This valve is intended to prevent the back-up of sewage from the sewer into the residence through the floor drain.

The valve is a flapper or ball that will often stick open because of a build-up of lint, corrosion or other debris unless it is inspected and maintained at least semi-annually. To locate the backwater valve, first remove the access cover or the floor drain grating and unscrew the cap. If you have additional questions, you may call the City Engineering Division's Sewer Maintenance Section at 266-4430.



Do not plant trees or shrubs over the private building sewer. The roots of trees, particularly Silver Maple and Willow, will seek out the joints of the sanitary sewer, eventually clogging the pipe.

Do not put large amounts of vegetable waste, such as pea pods or tomatoes through the garbage disposal at one time. Even though these materials will go through the garbage disposal, they can clog the private building sewer. This also applies to large amounts of grease and paint, which will build up in the building sewer over time. Keep lint traps in place in sinks that drain washing machines. It is easier to clean out the lint traps than it is to clean out the building sewer.

If the building sewer serves a commercial establishment in which a grease trap is required, the grease trap should be cleaned periodically to prevent solids from bypassing into the building sewer.

Being required to unplug or clean sediment from your building sewer every 1-3 years is not unusual. But if a homeowner has to have the building sewer cleaned more often than annually, he or she should consider contacting the city to determine if the public sewer or building sewer is contributing to the problem.