

You're the Solution to Runoff Pollution!

For More Information

Runoff Pollution Prevention

Sewer System Overflows



City of Gardena Stormwater Management Program



Any person who causes or permits sewage in excess of 1,000 gallons to be discharged to state waters shall immediately notify the Office of Emergency Services.

Any person who fails to provide the notice required by this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished by a fine (less than \$20,000) and/or imprisonment for not more than one year.

**To Report Sewer Spills, Dumping or
Suspicious Fluids or Materials to
Streets or Catch Basins**

Call

**City of Gardena
Public Works Department
(310)217-9528**

or

**County of Los Angeles
Department of Public Works
www.888CleanLA.com
24-7**

Sewage Spill Reference Guide

This pamphlet is to inform **Gardena** residents, businesses, and homeowners about the causes of, prevention of, and proper response to sewage spills.

What is a Sewage Spill?

Sewage spills occur when the wastewater being transported via underground pipes overflows through a manhole, cleanout, or broken pipe. Sewage spills can cause health hazards, damage to homes and businesses, and threaten the environment, local waterways, and oceans beaches.

How you can prevent Sewage Spills

How a Sewer System Works

A property owner's sewer pipes are called service laterals and are connected to larger local main and regional trunk lines. Service laterals run from the connection at the home to the connection with the public sewer (including the area under the street).

The laterals and connections to the main line are the responsibility of the property owner and must be maintained by the property owner.

Preventing Grease Blockages

Dispose of grease properly! Do not put grease down drains. Scrape off plates, pans, etc., into grease cans for recycling. Homeowners may place small amounts into trash bins for disposal.

- Sized correctly and designed to handle the expected amount of grease.
- Installed properly per local codes.
- Maintained properly, cleaned and serviced regularly.

How you can prevent Sewage Spills

- Never put grease down garbage disposals, drains, or toilets.
- Perform periodic cleaning to eliminate grease, debris and roots in your service laterals.
- Repair any structural problems in your sewer system and eliminate any rainwater infiltration/inflow leaks into your service laterals.

Common Causes of Sewage Spills

Grease builds up inside and eventually blocks sewer pipes. Grease gets into the sewer from food establishments, household drains, as well as from poorly maintained commercial grease traps and interceptors. Grease is the most common cause of pipe blockages.

- **Structure problems** caused by tree roots in the lines, broken/cracked pipes, missing or broken cleanout caps, or undersized sewers can cause blockages.
- **Infiltration and inflow (I/I)** impacts pipe capacity and is caused when groundwater or rainwater enters the sewer system through pipe defects and illegal connections.

Time is of the essence in dealing with sewage spills. You are required to immediately:

Control and minimize the spill.

Keep spills contained on private property and out of gutters, storm drains, and public waterways by shutting off or not using the water.

Use sandbags, dirt and/or plastic sheeting to prevent sewage from entering the storm drain system.

Clear the sewer blockage. Always wear gloves and wash your hands. It is recommended that a plumbing professional be called for clearing blockages and making necessary repairs.

**Immediately Report the Problem
to the City of Gardena
Public Works Department
(310) 217-9528**



*Never let any chemical products or polluted wash water run off your yard
and into the street or storm drain*