

# Sewer Backups



You received this brochure  
because you reported a  
problem with the sewer  
service to your property

**Environmental Services**  
403 887 2800



**Sylvan Lake**  
[sylvanlake.ca/water-sewer](http://sylvanlake.ca/water-sewer)

## Sewer mains check

Environmental Services staff checked the sewer mains in front of your property. They found that your sewer mains are operational.

## Sewer service line problems

There may be a problem with the service line running from your property to the main line. This cannot be detected from above ground.

## Clearing your service line

There are many ways to clear a sewer service line. You may clear your sewer line yourself using any method.

## Town assessment of sewer service line

You may ask for the Town to assess your sewer service line. This checklist makes sure we have everything we need to properly assess the line.

To make a request, homeowners must:

- ☐ Arrange a power flush and a video inspection of the sanitary service line. Contact a company that has:
  - power flushing equipment.
  - video camera equipment; and
  - line locating equipment.
- ☐ Mark the service line clearly with spray paint from the building to the sewer main in the street. Identify the location of all trouble spots on both private and public property. Take pictures of the markings to submit to the Town
- ☐ Email a copy of the video and pictures to [publicworks@sylvanlake.ca](mailto:publicworks@sylvanlake.ca), or deliver them to the Municipal Operations Building at 1 Industrial Drive, Sylvan Lake

## Who pays for repairs?

The homeowner, if the cause is:

- » Found in the portion of service line within your property, such as tree roots,

OR

- » Created within the home, such as grease, wipes, or other unflushables

The costs related to the power flush, video, and repair are the responsibility of the building owner or occupant(s).

The Town of Sylvan Lake does not accept liability for damage until the circumstances are investigated. Determination of liability is subject to the Municipal Government Act of Alberta.

## What to do if a sewer backup damaged your property

1. Contact your insurance provider for assistance
2. Your insurance adjustor will contact the Town to proceed
3. **Your insurance company may require relevant documentation ie:**
  - details of the sewer backup
  - invoices for related costs
  - photos
  - videos
4. If you have any further questions once a claim has been opened, contact your insurance provider

# STOP Expensive Clogs

Unflushables create clogs in our sewer system, causing sewer backups and expensive repairs! Utility bills fund these repairs.

Clogs within your property can cause sewer backups, and are your responsibility to fix. Clogs and sewer backups could cost you thousands.

## Don't flush it

- » Wipes (toilet, baby, beauty, cleaning). They are not flushable despite what manufacturers say
- » Medications
- » Plastics
- » Dental floss
- » Hair
- » Kleenex
- » Paper towels
- » Condoms
- » Tampons

## OK to flush

- » Toilet paper, poo, pee



Actual clog in  
Sylvan Lake sewer



## What you pour down your sink can DRAIN your bank account



### What is a sewer back up?

- » If the sewer service line gets blocked or damaged, it blocks the normal flow of water into the municipal main sewer line. That means raw sewage can back up through your floor drain.

### Some signs of a sewer drain block:

- » Several plumbing fixtures are blocked or drain slowly
- » The toilet plugs easily or makes gurgling noises when flushing
- » The washing machine doesn't drain or backs up into the toilet or bathtub

### Tips to prevent it!

- » Don't pour fats/oils down the drain. They can harden and block drains
- » Don't flush paper towels, wipes (including flushable wipes as they are not actually flushable), diapers, or feminine hygiene products down the toilet

- » Use your garbage disposal correctly. Always run water before and after to wash food waste down the drain
- » Backwater valves / back flow prevention devices are one way valves that prevent sewer water from flowing back into your home in the event of backup in the municipal main sewer line. A plumber can install one if your home does not already have one. Check your valve regularly to make sure it is good working order

### What else can cause a sewer back up?

- » Tree roots from trees planted on property
- » Municipal main sewer line back up

### Questions?

- » [www.sylvanlake.ca/water-sewer](http://www.sylvanlake.ca/water-sewer)
- » Environmental Services: 403 887 2800