

# Village of Obetz Utilities Department

## DEALING WITH SANITARY SEWER BACK-UPS

### **What to do when you experience a sewer back-up?**

Prior to calling a plumber, residents should notify the Village anytime they experience a sanitary sewer back-up. A representative from the Village will respond to your home to determine if a problem exists in the main sewer line. We are on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to serve our customers and residents. This service is provided at no cost to you and will save you the expense of calling a plumber if the main sewer line is the problem.

For all sanitary sewer concerns, contact the Utilities Department at (614) 491-5733 during normal business hours. If there is a problem after hours, there will be an emergency contact number on the answering machine.

### **Preventing Sanitary Sewer Back-ups**

A sanitary sewer back-up can be a stressful and costly problem. Luckily, many sewer back-ups and overflows can be eliminated through preventive maintenance.

Obetz homeowners are responsible for the maintenance of sanitary sewer lines and connections from their home to the main sewer line. The Village has a maintenance program for the main sewer lines—we check manholes on a regular schedule; camera lines that have proved to be a problem in the past; and clean lines by running a high volume of water through it. In some areas the sewer feeds into a lift station. The Village checks lift stations daily including weekends and holidays in order to minimize the chance of a problem. Lift stations are also cleaned regularly.

There are a number of things residents can do to help make sure sanitary sewer lines remain unobstructed.

### **Roots**

Tree and shrub roots are one of the main causes of sanitary sewer back-ups. The roots seek moisture and make their way into sewer pipe cracks and older joints. The roots may start out small, entering through a crack or joint in the pipe but as the tree or shrub grows so does the root. After time, this causes your sewer line to become obstructed with roots and then waste builds up resulting in a sewer back-up.

If you continue to have a problem with tree roots in your sewer, you should hire a sewer and drain company to cut them out annually, remove the tree or shrub that is causing the problem, or replace your service line with new plastic pipe.

### **Paper Products**

Paper towels, diapers, and feminine products cause a great deal of problems in residential sewer lines. Unlike bathroom tissue, these products do not deteriorate quickly; instead, they can become lodged in portions of your sewer line, causing a sewer line back-up. Rather than take a chance on backing up your service line or the Village's main line please dispose of these products in the garbage.

### **Grease**

Avoid pouring cooking oil or other grease down the drain. Some people assume that washing grease down the drain with hot water is satisfactory. This does not stop the grease from solidifying; it only delays it. When it does solidify, the line constricts and eventually clogs. Instead pour grease into a heat-resistant container, let it cool, and then throw it in the garbage.

