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Department of Public Works Sewer Blockage Prevention

Sewerage backing up through the sewer system in your home or business is a very unpleasant situation. However, there are steps you can take to prevent it from happening to you.

A number of causes could be responsible for the sewer blockage.

Some of the causes include:

- Kitchen grease, disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, and even the accumulation of some types of cleaning materials and detergents can lead to a blockage.
- Tree roots are a big problem, especially with older sewer lines, as they will grow through cracks in the line to seek water.
- Illegal hookups to the sewer will allow excess water into the lines. Rain gutters and sump pumps should never be hooked into the sewer system. The Town's sewer system is only designed to accommodate a certain amount of water, and rainwater, during periods of heavy rain. Illegal hookups overload the system and cause problems.

Hopefully you will never have a problem with a sewer blockage. However, if you do, you can minimize the damage to your property by taking the following preventative measures:

- Do make sure you have a sewer cleanout and that it is readily accessible.
- Do consider having a plumber install a backflow valve. Inspect and maintain it regularly.
- All existing or new building drains from plumbing fixtures liable to backflow from a DPW sewer, or a private sewer connected to DPW sewer, shall be required to have backwater valves installed at the owner's expense. Any plumbing fixture located at an elevation below the top of the manhole on the DPW sewer serving the fixture shall be considered to be liable to backflow. Backflow valves shall be installed in accordance with 248 CMR Section 10.15 of the Uniform State Plumbing Code.