

## **VILLAGE OF GRANVILLE SEWER BACK-UP and WATER LEAK POLICIES**

### ***SEWER BACK-UP POLICY***

#### **General**

Sewer back-ups are an unfortunate, but common problem in older communities. A sewer back-up can create a health or safety issue. Although the Village utility departments make every effort to prevent such incidents, back-ups can still occur.

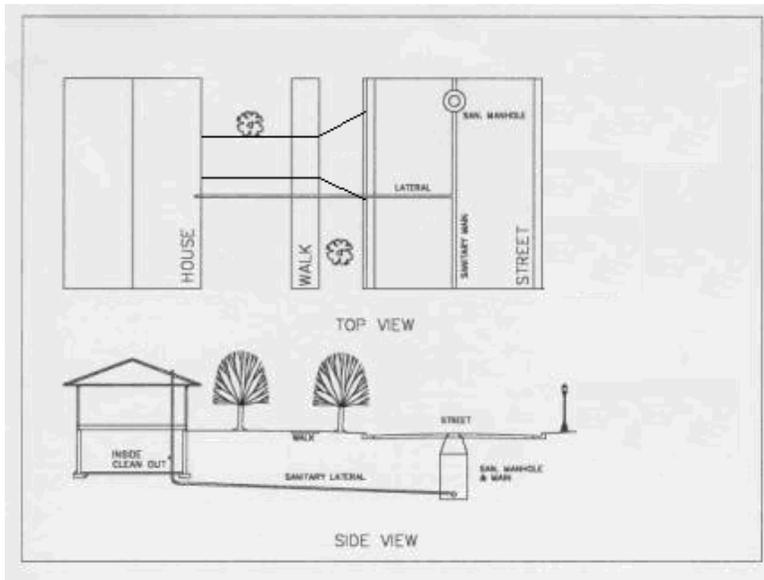
The information in this policy is offered to help property owners and renters understand why back-ups happen, how the numbers and the severity of back-ups can be reduced, and what steps residents should take if a sewer back-up affects their property.

#### **What causes a sewer back-up?**

Sanitary sewer back-ups can be caused by a number of factors. Pipe blockages in either main sewer lines or private service laterals (a smaller diameter sewer pipe connecting the building and the Village's main sewer line), pipe failure, intrusive tree roots, grease accumulation and solid materials such as disposable diapers or sanitary wipes that are too large for wastewater pipes to handle. Also, excessive Inflow & Infiltration (I & I) can overload a pipe's flow capacity with rain and ground water. I&I intrusion is water that enters the sewer system through cross connection of storm drains, sump pumps, roof drains, and cracks in piping. Generally, the private service lateral is the site of the back-up due to the smaller diameter pipe, limited inspection and maintenance and out dated jointed sections that allow the intrusion of tree roots.

#### **Responsibility**

The property owner / renter is responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of the private service lateral from the building structure to the Village sewer main including the wye pipe connection, or tee connection, at the sewer main. (See drawing below) The Village is responsible for the proper maintenance and operation of the main sewer lines, manholes, pump stations and the wastewater treatment facilities.



Because of the number of pipes, age of the system, inaccessibility and ability for unauthorized contributions to the sewer system, the Village cannot guarantee a fault free operation of its sanitary sewer system. The Village exercises reasonable and ordinary care in the operation and maintenance of the sanitary sewer system. "Acts of God" such as heavy rainfall, debris blockage, tree root intrusion, water line ruptures and unknown storm sewer cross connections can result in blockages, which are not always found and remedied during ordinary care and operation.

### **What does the Village do to reduce this problem?**

Every attempt is made to prevent back-ups in the sanitary main line sewer system before they occur. Sewer lines are designed to reduce accumulation and stoppages. In addition, the Village maintenance crews inspect and clean and sewer pipes/lines throughout the Village on a regular basis. The Village main sewer line system is inspected and cleaned every three years on a rotating basis. Grease and grit prone areas are cleaned yearly to reduce or eliminate back-up issues. Regardless of Village actions, sewer back-ups can happen that are beyond Village control.

### **How could a sewer back-up affect me?**

If a back-up occurs in a Village maintained line, the wastewater will normally overflow at the lowest possible opening, generally in the home's lowest drain and toilet.

### **What should I do if sewage backs-up into my home?**

- Take action to protect people and valuable property by limiting contact with sewage.
- Do not run any tap water down your drains until the blockage has been cleared.
- Contact the Village. We will assist with the location of the problem and help with initial clean-up
- Check with nearby neighbors to see if they are experiencing similar problems to help determine if the back-up appears to be in your service line or in the Village main line.
- Call a plumber if the problem is in your private lateral service line.
- To minimize damage and negative health effects, you should arrange for clean-up of the property as soon as possible. There are qualified businesses that specialize in this type of cleanup.

### **If I call the Village, what will they do about a sewer back-up onto my property?**

- Village personnel will check for blockages in the main line. If found, the blockage will be cleared as soon as possible.
- If the Village's main line is not blocked, you will be advised to call a plumbing or sewer contractor to check your private service lateral line. Maintenance and repair of the private sewer pipe is the owner's responsibility from the property structure to the main line including tees and wyes.
- If the sewer back-up resulted from blockage in the main sewer line, Village personnel will explain what the Village can do to help take care of the problem.

### **Is there anything I can do to reduce the possibility of a sewage back-up into my home?**

- Avoid putting grease down your garbage disposal or household drain. It can solidify, collect debris and accumulate in Village lines or build up in your own system.
- Never flush disposable diapers, sanitary napkins or paper towels down the toilet. They could stop up your drains and damage your plumbing system.
- If the lateral line to your older home has a jointed pipe system, consider whether the roots of large shrubs or trees near the line could invade and break pipes. It is always helpful to know the location of your private lateral line(s). If you contact the Wastewater Department, staff may be able to help locate your lateral line.
- If the lowest level of your home is below ground level, such as a basement floor drain, it may one day be affected by a back-up. One way to prevent sewage back-up through such below ground areas is to have a plumber

- install a “back-flow valve” on the lowest drain(s). You can also have the plumber install a test plug to close these drains when not in use.
- For further preventive measures, contact a plumber and they should be able to provide you with assistance.

### **Will insurance cover any damage to my home or property?**

Many insurance companies offer sewer back-up coverage. Call your insurance agent to see if coverage is available for your policy.

### **Will the Village assist in clean-up and cover financial loss to property?**

The Village of Granville may provide financial assistance to those back-ups that have occurred due to neglect on the Village’s system and not as a result of “Act of God.” Citizens may incur expenses and damages due to a sewer main line back-up or flooding as the result of a water main break. The Village regrets those events and strives to prevent them. However, the Village, as the operation of a sewer utility system, cannot be held responsible for these “Acts of God.” If it is determined that there was neglect on the Village’s operation, the Village will provide clean-up reimbursement and financial recovery assistance. The Village will not provide financial or clean-up assistance for a back-up caused by a private service lateral.

### **How and where should I report a sewer back-up?**

Village personnel are available 24-hours a day to assist you. In an emergency, such as a sewer line back-up, contact the Utilities Department at the numbers listed at the bottom of this document.

## **WATER LEAK POLICY**

### **General**

Underground water lines, known as water mains and water service lines, can sometimes leak or break. When a pipe leaks or a break happens, water will escape. Because water mains are under constant pressure, water escaping will flow until the break is discovered, and then repaired. During this period, residents may notice low or no water pressure and the potential for property flooding may exist.

### **What causes a water line break?**

Water line leaks can happen year-round. There are many contributing factors including pipe age, pipe material, soil conditions, temperature, and system pressure fluctuations.

### **What is involved in repairing a water leak?**

When a suspected water leak call is received, a crew is dispatched to determine the location, impact and severity of the leak. First, the water main is controlled, by closing nearby water pipe valves to separate the leaking pipe from the rest of the water distribution system. Depending on the type of leak, this will either reduce the flow of water to the affected water main or shut it off completely. Once the general repair location has been identified and the water main is shut off, the precise location of the leak is identified and the repair crew is dispatched to the location to begin repairs. Prior to any excavation, the crew must identify the location of all utilities (gas, electricity, phone, etc.) to ensure the repair can be completed without damaging other utilities, endangering staff or the public. This step may take several hours.

Excavation exposes the broken water main and the repair is completed. The pipes are then flushed and water is tested to ensure water quality before water service is restored.

After that, the damaged road, lane, sidewalk or lawn must be repaired to the match the existing surface features. This repair may take time depending on the construction season, weather and the availability of equipment and materials.

### **My water was turned off - why?**

We do our best to notify customers of service interruptions when they occur. Unfortunately, we cannot predict the time or place of service interruptions. Your notification of service interruption may be delayed due to the size of the leak or other demands of the staff.

### **How long does it take to repair a water line?**

It can be difficult to predict when water service will be restored during a main line repair. The length of repair time can vary depending on the location of the leak, condition of the soil, the condition of the pipe, seasonal activities, availability of repair materials and location of the excavation. However, staff makes every effort to minimize the length of time customers are out of water.

### **Is my water safe to drink?**

After the water service is restored to normal operations, staff may flush the lines and sample the water to ensure the quality of the water is returned to normal conditions. Additionally, it is recommended that the homeowner flushes the pipe system within your own home by running each cold water tap used for drinking for a few minutes. This action will purge any air and assist in removing of any discoloration.

If the Village feels it is necessary to issue a "boil order notice," the residents will be notified. Please consult the Village of Granville's Water Depressurization policy for further information concerning Water Depressurization.

### **My property was damaged by the water main pipe repair. Will the Village fix my property?**

The Village will fix your lawn with soil and grass seed. Once repaired, it will be the homeowner's responsibility to water and maintain the replacement. All asphalt and concrete that was disturbed will be repaired to as close to original condition as possible.

Restoration can only be done during warmer weather months as controlled by the weather and ground conditions.

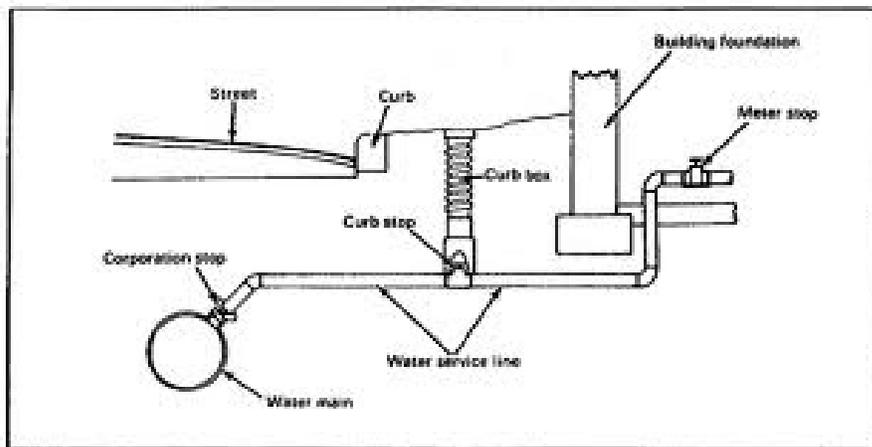
The Village will not be responsible to property damage caused by the flooding of a water line leak, unless the cause was Village neglect of maintenance responsibilities. Water line leaks are an unfortunate occurrence and can cause damage to personal property. Water leaks are generally uncontrollable and unforeseen; therefore, they are treated as an "Act of God." Property owners

should consult their insurance provider and determine if there is coverage available. If a leak was determined to be caused by neglect from the Village, appropriate reimbursement may be provided by the Village or its insurance carrier.

### **Who is responsible?**

The Village owns and maintains the water mains, main line valves, fire hydrants, tapping saddles, water meters and service lines up to the curb box including the curb box.

The property owner is responsible for the private service line from the curb box to your home. The Village is only responsible for the water meter past the curb box, but no other plumbing fixtures or equipment. Any meter damaged by abuse, misuse, accident or act of carelessness will be repaired or replaced by the Village at the expense of the property owner, per Codified Ordinance Water Regulations 925.08(g).



### **What if I see a water line break?**

Contact the Village using a number listed below so a crew can be dispatched to evaluate the situation.

#### **Normal Business Hours**

Wastewater Treatment Plant	(740) 587-2304
Water Treatment Plant	(740) 587-0165
Granville Municipal Building	(740) 587-0707

#### **After Business Hours**

Granville Police Department	(740) 587-1234
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