



# CITY OF MILPITAS

455 East Calaveras Boulevard, Milpitas, California 95035-5479 • [www.ci.milpitas.ca.gov](http://www.ci.milpitas.ca.gov)

## PREVENTING SEWER BACKUPS

Dear Property Owner and/or Resident:

Maintaining health and safety conditions at home and at work relies upon a properly functioning sanitary sewer system. You can help reduce sewer line blockages, along with potential backups into homes and businesses, by following some simple rules.

Follow these “Don’t’s and Do’s” to help prevent backups and blockages, save money, and comply with local requirements.

### **DON’T:**

- Pour grease down the drain. Cooking grease hardens in sewer pipes and creates a plug resulting in potentially costly repairs. This is a primary cause of blockages. Do not pour cooking grease, fats or oils down the sink drain – hot water ***will not*** melt fat away. Instead, scrape fats, oils and grease from plates and pans into a covered container (this food grease should be less than one quart) and put it in the trash container. If necessary, store it in the refrigerator until garbage collection day.
- Flush disposable diapers down the toilet. Flushing disposal diapers clogs sewer pipes and creates a plug. Place diapers in the garbage.
- Put food wrappers down the drain. Plastic wrap and bags, aluminum foil and wax paper belong in the garbage. These materials ***cannot*** be recycled, so try reusable food containers and reduce waste in the first place. Call the City of Milpitas **Recycling Hotline at (408) 586-2680** for more ideas.
- Plant trees and large shrubs near sewer lines. Roots grow toward breaks and cracks in search of a water source. If roots get inside the pipes, they often form “root balls” that clog the line. Consider drought tolerant plants and trees. Call the **City of Milpitas Public Works Trees Section at (408) 586-2601** for tree recommendations.
- Remove a curbside tree without obtaining a tree removal permit from the City.
- Dig without calling Underground Service Alert (1-800-642-2444).
- Proceed automatically with an expensive repair. Always get a second opinion.
- Use an unlicensed, unknown contractor to make repairs.
- Pour anything toxic down the sewer or storm drain.
- Open a manhole for any reason. The City will do this for you.

**DO:**

- Use the garbage disposal sparingly – place food scraps in the garbage. Try composting fruits, vegetables, and eggshells to reduce waste and create a valuable soil amendment. Do not compost meat or dairy products. The County of Santa Clara offers free composting workshops in Milpitas from March through October. Call the **Home Composting Education Program** at **(408) 918-4640**.
- Ask a plumber about preventative maintenance on problem sewer lines.
- Obtain a City permit if you need to make a lateral repair. If a plumber will be making the repair, he or she should obtain the permit.
- Use only a licensed contractor to make necessary repairs.
- Recycle oil, paint, and other toxic materials at a recycling center.
- Consider installing a backflow preventer to prevent flooding in your building.

**Contact the City of Milpitas to report problems and seek advice:**

- To report sanitary sewer back-ups into dwellings or on the street, call the **Public Works Department** at **(408) 586-2600**, Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If you have a sewer problem after regular business hours, please call the **Police Department Dispatch** at **(408) 586-2400** for assistance. Staff is available day and night to check the main sewer line. If it is clear and flowing, but a blockage is in the lateral, the property owner will then need to call a plumber to clear the line.
- To help determine whether you need a backflow preventer, contact a licensed plumber.

We hope this provides some useful information. We can all help to maintain our high quality of life, and community health and safety by working together.

¡Este documento contiene información importante para usted!

Por favor, tradúzcalo o pídale a alguien que le ayude.

本文件包含您所需要的重要資訊。請翻譯內容或要求他人協助您。

Tài liệu này có những tin tức quan trọng dành cho quý vị!

Hãy dịch thuật hay nhờ một người nào đó giúp quý vị.

여기에 중요한 내용이 나와 있습니다!

번역을 해서 읽으시거나, 누군가의 도움을 받아 잘 이해하셔야만 합니다.