



HOW YOU CAN HELP KEEP SEWER RATES LOW



1. Do not flush items that don't belong in the sewer system. The cost for cleaning the sewer lines, screening this material, and wear on the system is very high. The only items that belong down your drains are water, poop, pee, and toilet paper. Flushable wipes are not flushable, they block sewer mains and household plumbing drains. Currently there is litigation regarding this type of description on products.
2. Your garbage disposal is not a trash bin. Vegetables, table scraps, and other materials found in the kitchen belong in the trash and not down the drain. Organic material passed through garbage disposals and into the sewer system cause increased aeration demands at the wastewater treatment plant and greatly increase electricity costs.
3. Do not put fats, oils, or grease down the drain. Pour grease into a can or other storage container and allow cooling before placing into the trash. Grease plugs the sewer system mains and can lead to sewer system backups into homes and businesses.
4. Purchase an efficient water softener and setup based on your water hardness. An efficient water softener will pay for itself in salt savings and protects our environment. Salt in wastewater cannot be removed by the treatment plant. Salt travels through the treatment process and end up in the Zumbro River which can have negative impacts on fish and wildlife in high concentrations. Do your part and reduce your water softener salt use. Contact Rochester Public Utilities (RPU) for more information.
5. Sump pumps, roof drains, and storm water drainage systems cannot be connected to the sanitary sewer system as described by Ordinance 76B. Connections such as these lead to sewer system backups into homes and businesses during storm events because the system cannot convey the high rainwater flows. Roof drains, sump pumps, and other drainage system should discharge to your yard or ditch. Other storm water conveyance systems exist throughout the City; contact the storm water group in public works for more information.
6. Understand products you use that have nitrogen (often called "ammonia") and phosphorous (often called "phosphate"). Phosphorous and nitrogen are often found in cleaning supplies such as laundry detergents, window cleaners, ammonia based cleaning solutions, dish detergents, and other common household supplies. Use only what is needed as directed by the manufacturer and don't dispose any excess cleaning supplies down the drain.
7. Nitrogen and phosphorous are also used in fertilizers. A portion of these nutrients inevitable runoff into area streams. While this does not affect the performance of the Water Reclamation Plant itself, plants are regulated to offset the loading caused by these nutrients found in area streams. The more fertilizer that finds its way to the river means the more the Water Reclamation Plant has to treat to offset these nutrient loads. If the offset becomes large enough, the plant will need to expand costing tens of millions of dollars which will increase sewer rates. Only use fertilizer you need and keep fertilizer off streets and sidewalks.