

FAQ: SANITRAY SEWER FLUSHING

What are sanitary sewers?

Sanitary sewers are underground pipes that carry wastewater from homes and businesses to the Village's lagoon where it is treated and then released back to the environment as clean water. Everything you pour down your drain or flush down your toilet goes into a sewer.

Why are you cleaning and inspecting the sewers?

The cleaning and inspection program keeps the sewer system operating efficiently by:

- helping prevent blockages and backups
- removing built-up debris, such as tree roots, grease, grit and sand
- determining the condition of the sewer so we can repair or replace sewers as necessary

How do you clean the sewers?

We use a high-pressure nozzle to flush water down the sewer. The dirt and debris are sucked up through a manhole by a large vacuum truck and taken to a disposal site.

How do you inspect the sewers?

When necessary and to diagnose specific issues, we would contract a company to insert a remotely operated closed circuit television (CCTV) camera into the sewer to record its condition. From the video we can tell if we need to repair or replace the sewer.

Do you clean and inspect the sewers at the same time?

Often this is done at the same time but not always. We clean and then can return later to inspect them with CCTV if it is deemed necessary.

How long does it take to clean the sewers on each street?

It usually takes a few hours to clean each street. However, some sewers can take longer, depending on their size and condition.

Do I need to do anything before you clean/inspect the sewers on my street?

You certainly can. Occasionally during cleaning and inspection, air movement in the sewer can cause water to splash out through toilets, sinks and drains. This is often a result of inadequate

venting within the plumbing system of the home. Ensuring your homes plumbing system is in good condition and is up to current codes can reduce the likelihood of this occurring. Take the following precautions to prevent water damage in your home:

- Close the lids on all toilet bowls when not in use.
- Insert drain plugs in all sinks and bathtubs when not in use.
- Remove all floor mats in bathrooms.
- Place an old towel around the base of toilets.
- If you have a float plug in your floor drain or a backwater valve installed in your house, ensure that it is free of debris and operating properly.
- Wrap the cover of your basement floor drains with thick plastic (i.e., a freezer bag). Place something heavy over the floor drains to keep the plastic-covered floor drain covers in place.

If you are running your cold water tap to prevent your water line from freezing during the winter, run water from a tap at the highest elevation in the house (i.e. main floor or upper level, not basement) without inserting the drain plug.

Please follow the precautions above for all remaining fixtures (toilets, sinks, and drains).

Will I notice anything after you have cleaned/inspected the sewers on my street?

Sometimes the sewer cleaning and inspection leaves an odour in the home. If so, run some water down the sink and bathtub drains, flush the toilets, pour a pail of water into each basement floor drain, and open the windows. After a short time, the odour should disappear.

Can I use the toilets and my water while you are cleaning and inspecting the sewer on my block?

Yes. However, be careful as air pressure in the sewer during the cleaning and inspection can sometimes cause water to splash out through toilets, sinks and drains. Remember to close the lids on all toilet bowls when not in use, and insert drain plugs in all sinks and bathtubs when not in use.

Ways you can protect your home against sewer backup.

The sewer cleaning program is one of the steps that we take to reduce the risk of sewer backup. This is normally done every 2-3 years. Homeowners should ensure that any work that is done to your plumbing system is done with the appropriate permits issued. This will reduce any risks related to faulty plumbing.

There are steps you can take to protect your home against basement flooding, including:

- install a backwater valve and sump pit drainage system with a building permit.
- check and maintain your backwater valve and sump pit drainage system regularly.
- improve surface drainage at ground level away from your house.

Will there be any disruptions?

We realize that the equipment can be noisy and may disturb residents. Sometimes this cannot be avoided and we appreciate your patience. We also appreciate your patience as some areas of some streets may be blocked by the equipment for short periods of time.