

Memphis Sewage Backup Information Sheet

What to do when water comes through your sewage line into your basement:

- Identify the entry point: basement drain, basement toilet or washer.
- Call Environmental Maintenance @ (901) 529-8025 and tell them the water is entering from a sewage line. You might also contact the 24-hour Memphis Storm Water Hotline @ (901) 576-6721.
- If Environmental Maintenance doesn't respond with offering to send someone out, persist until you have their agreement that someone will come investigate at your residence.
- Environmental Maintenance should send someone to inspect that day. If they determine it is sewage backup due to overflow from storm drains, they will send someone to sanitize your basement.
- If you want your basement sanitized before Environmental Maintenance does it (but after they've seen the damage), you may have it done independently and file a claim later.
- Document backup and damage with photographs, video, and timeline.
- Document property loss with photographs, receipts, repair estimates.
- Keep records of the following:
 - What telephone number you called
 - When you called (date and time)
 - Whom you spoke to (first and last name)
 - What they said
 - Who came to your home
 - What they did
- Keep copies of all documentation sent to you by the City.
- Continue to contact Environmental Maintenance each month for updates on your area and keep records of these calls.
- File a claim with the City for damages, repairs, and property loss. The claim form is available here: http://www.memphistn.gov/LegalForms/static_claim_form.pdf or you may contact the claims department at (901)-636-6616. Keep copies of everything you send to the City. It will take many months for the City to process your claim. Follow up by phone each month.
- Read the City of Memphis Sewage Backup Claims Procedure here: www.memphistn.gov/pdf_forms/ClaimsProcedureDamagesFromSanitarySewerResidential.pdf

What to do now:

- Ask your insurance provider to add a sewage backup rider to your homeowner's policy. It is not very expensive.
- Consider having a plumber install a cut off valve in your basement drain (~\$1500).
- Consider having a plumber install a back flow valve on your residential sewer line.
- Consider installing a high volume sump pump with a battery backup in your basement.
- Cover your basement drain with sand bags or other obstruction.
- Identify where your sewer line is, where the main line is, and where your sewer clean out point is.
- Consider acquiring flood insurance through FEMA (your local agent can process the application).
- Keep in mind that if and when you decide to sell your home, you will be required by law to disclose any flooding and/or sewage backup whether it is in your basement or home and that this may affect your home's resale value.