

WATERWORKS™

NEWS YOU CAN USE AROUND YOUR HOME

SPRING 2018

5 Steps to Reduce the Possibility of a Sewer Backup into Your Home

Your home is susceptible to sewer backups that create not just a disgusting mess but also threaten your health and can damage valuable contents of your residence.

It's important that you know many insurance policies do not cover the expensive damage that can occur as the result of a sewer backup—unless you purchased the additional coverage. Please, if you're not sure if you're covered, spend a few minutes to call your agent and ask! It could save you big money and frustration.

Here are 5 steps that you can do to help reduce the possibility of your sewer backing up into your home. They are:

1. Dispose of Grease Properly. Cooking oil and fat should be poured into a heat-resistant container and disposed of properly. Washing grease down the drain with hot water is unsatisfactory. As the grease cools off, it will solidify in the drain, your line, or in the main sewer causing the line to clog.

2. Dispose of Paper Products Properly. Paper towels, disposable (and cloth) diapers, wipes and feminine products can cause trouble in the property owner's lateral line as well as in the city main. These products do not deteriorate as quickly as bathroom tissue does, so do not put them down the drain or toilet.

3. Get a Sewer Line Checkup. Notice a slowdown in drains or a gurgling sound? It could be an indication of root damage. Steve Huff Plumbing technicians will examine the sewage system using a camera probe. Severe damage likely will need replacement, and lesser problems can be solved with preventive maintenance.

4. Correct Illegal Plumbing Connections. Do not connect French drains, sump pumps, and other flood-control systems to your sanitary sewer. It is illegal, and debris and silt will clog your line. Give Steve Huff Plumbing a call if you're not sure if you have any preexisting, illegal connections. French drains are used to prevent ground and surface water from penetrating or damaging building foundations.

5. Install a Backflow-Prevention Valve. This device is a fixture installed into a sewer line, and sometimes into a drain line, in the basement of your home to prevent sewer backflows. A properly installed and maintained backflow-prevention valve allows sewage to go out, but not come back in. You are responsible for the installation and maintenance of these valves.

At Steve Huff Plumbing, we can help you with several of these steps. We can also do a camera inspection of your sewer line to see what kind of shape it's in. With the inspection, you'll know precisely if it's free-flowing or has roots buried deep that could cause serious issues. Call us at 423-239-8361 to schedule a camera inspection!



Helpful Consumer Hints!

Info You Should Know as a Homeowner!

It doesn't matter if you have a heating or cooling, plumbing, electrical, or roofing problem—they're all annoying! You have a busy schedule and don't want to wait for a service technician! When choosing your service company, be sure to hire one that stays on top of communicating with you. Choose one that calls you before the technician comes out so you can go about your day as normal before your service call. Choose Steve Huff Plumbing.

We are licensed, bonded and insured. We nationally background check all of our employees & are a Tennessee Drug-Free Workplace with random drug screening.

There's no need to sit at home all day. You deserve prompt service! Steve Huff Plumbing delivers. Let us help you with your plumbing problem today. Call 423-239-8361 to schedule your appointment

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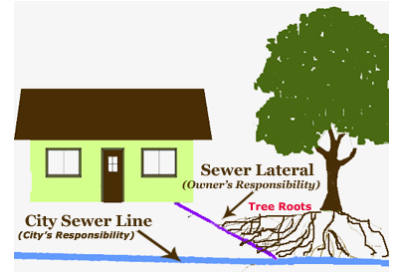
Steve Huff Plumbing's Educational Corner!

Learn about Your Home's Plumbing System!

A lateral sewer connects the indoor plumbing of a house with the main sewer lines which carry waste away for treatment and processing. The lateral sewer is the responsibility of the property owner. At 4 to 6 inches in diameter, it is buried outside your home and slopes into the sewage system's main line.

The most common problem with lateral sewers is blockage. Such clogs are addressed by accessing the sewer cleanout, a pipe which juts out of the lateral, usually just before it enters the structure. A wire snake and other devices can be put into the cleanout to clear the blockage and allow wastewater to run freely down the lateral.

If you suspect that you're having problems with your lateral sewer, you should call Steve Huff Plumbing immediately at 423-239-8361.



Handy Hints to Help Clean Your House

Here are a few quick tips for cleaning inside your home this spring:

Crayon marks on walls? A damp rag, dipped in baking soda works wonderfully! Comes off with little effort (elbow grease that is)!

Permanent marker on appliances/counter tops? Use rubbing alcohol on a paper towel.

Blood stains on clothes? Not to worry! Just pour a little hydrogen peroxide on a cloth and proceed to wipe off every drop of blood. Works every time!

Place fabric softener sheets in dresser drawers and your clothes will smell freshly washed for weeks to come. You can also do this with towels and linen.

To easily remove burnt-on food from your skillet, simply add a drop or two of dish soap and enough water to cover the bottom of the pan, and bring it to a boil on your stovetop.

Spray your tupperware with nonstick cooking spray before pouring in tomato based sauces and there won't be any stains.

Use air-freshener to clean mirrors. It does a good job and better still, leaves a lovely smell to the shine.

Now look what you can do with Alka Seltzer. Clean a toilet. Drop in two Alka Seltzer tablets; wait twenty minutes, brush, and flush. The citric acid and effervescent action clean vitreous China.



Vegetable Gardens for Kids—And You!

Who says spring gardening is for adults only? Children love to play in the dirt, so give them a reason to use a shovel and squirt a hose. Embrace a bit of chaos and have a lot of fun. Spring planting can be small enough for youngsters to enjoy. It's a terrific activity for parents, grandparents and children—and produces tasty results.

Steve Huff Plumbing encourages you to teach children in creative ways. There are few better options than simple gardening. Small spaces are ideal for small hands, either in containers or square-foot plots. Children learn to work with hand tools, develop dexterity, watch their efforts spring to life and—most important of all—spend quality time with you.

No yard space? Containers are great for sunny decks or porches.

We're talking inexpensive ways to teach. Want flowers? How about nasturtiums? Marigolds are easy and help ward off insects. And no vegetable grows more quickly than radishes.

Let's get growing!

What you need:

- Rectangular planter or plot. 3 feet long, 8 inches high, and 1 foot wide
- 1 seed packet each: radishes, lettuce and nasturtiums
- Potting soil (One bag should fill your planter)
- Trowels
- Watering can
- Flat sticks for labels

What You Do:

1. Check the weather and pick your spot. These are cool-weather seeds, but beware of frost: start planting when night temperatures are regularly above freezing! Also, find a spot with direct sun at least several hours daily. This is a great way to teach science to your child, introducing key elements of weather and sunlight needed for plant growth.

2. Prepare your plot. Good dirt and drainage are vital for plants. Place potting soil into your plot. Smooth the top, but don't push it down—airy soil will help nourish seeds. Let your little helper find small rocks to line the bottom.

3. Plant radishes. Place seeds in a row, roughly 2 inches apart, at least an inch from a long edge of your plot. Your child can place a seed on top of the soil, poke it down about an inch, and smooth the soil over it. Write "radishes" on a stick and place the stick at the end of the row.

4. Plant your other seeds. The other seeds grow well in patches rather than rows. Leave 2 to 3 inches from your radish row, and mark off two rectangular patches: one for lettuce, one for nasturtiums. Plant large-seeded nasturtiums at least 3 inches apart. Lettuce seeds are smaller; sprinkle them out and cover with a light blanket of soil. Once you have planted your seeds, be sure to mark the sections. Soak the ground with a gentle spray from a watering can or sprinkler head. All the while, talk with your young gardener about the shape and size of the seeds.

5. Tend your garden. Combine a daily chore with a sense of anticipation. Water daily, and watch for sprouts. If lettuce and radish plants are too close together, thin them to about 2 inches apart. Help your child identify plant parts: roots, stems, leaves and flowers.

Talk about instant gratification—sprouts from these quick-growing seeds will put to the surface in a week or two. Within six weeks, you should harvest your first lettuce and radishes, and within nine weeks your little florist can make a bright nasturtium bouquet for the table. Adventurous eaters may even put nasturtium leaves and flowers in a salad.

Favor flowers? HGTV.com suggests 13 varieties that even adults can't bungle. Check them out at <http://www.hgtv.com/outdoors/flowers-and-plants/flowers/13-cant-kill-flowers-for-beginners-pictures>



Tasty and EASY Spring Strawberry Salad with Chicken

Nothing says spring like fresh strawberries. And with home-grown spinach ... this salad can't be beat.

Prep time 25 minutes. Cook time 10 minutes. Ready in 35 minutes.



Ingredients

- 2 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cubed
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinaigrette salad dressing
- 1 bunch fresh spinach, rinsed and dried
- 1 pint strawberries, sliced
- 4 ounces crumbled goat cheese
- 1 (5 ounce) package candied pecans

For topping

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinaigrette salad dressing

Directions

1. Place the chicken breast meat into a skillet with 2 tablespoons of olive oil and 2 tablespoons of balsamic vinaigrette over medium heat; cook and stir until the chicken is browned, no longer pink in the center, and the juice has nearly evaporated, about 10 minutes. Remove the chicken to a bowl and let cool.

2. Place the spinach into a salad bowl; scatter the strawberries, goat cheese and candied pecans over the spinach. Drizzle 2 tablespoons of olive oil and 2 tablespoons of balsamic vinaigrette over the salad and top with the chicken. Serve slightly warm or chilled.

Footnotes

- Makes 8 servings of 317 calories each

Tip

Aluminum foil helps keep food moist, ensures it cooks evenly, keeps leftovers fresh, and makes clean-up easy. Find this and other taste sensations at allrecipes.com



SPRING WORD SEARCH

In honor of spring, Steve Huff Plumbing presents a Spring Word Search! Be the first to complete the word search, and you will receive a \$25 gift certificate to Nick's Family Restaurant in Kingsport or Johnson City!

Mail completed puzzle to:
113 Witherspoon Drive, Kingsport TN 37663.

Or scan and email completed puzzle to:
tammy@stevehuffplumbing.com



Baseball	Gardening	Puddles
Birds	Green	Rain
Blossoms	Growing	Seeds
Buds	Kite	Showers
Daffodils	Nesting	Sunshine
Flowers	Planting	Tulips

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Welcome Spring



From the Desk
of Steve Huff

Goodbye, winter! It's time for green grass, sunshine, flowers and vegetable gardens.

I'm one of those impatient people eager to jumpstart spring. What you might call houseplants, I call office brighteners. I have relaxing green spaces by the windows here at Steve Huff Plumbing and at home.

Flowers and plants don't need much. And they don't have to be expensive. Example? I have two plants that came from cuttings I salvaged from a friend. These plants are now four years old and have themselves been pruned several times for new cuttings.

Got a brown thumb? I did too, so I guarantee these are simple projects that produce results. You don't need anything fancy or expensive. Cuttings from house plants, tender perennials and summer bedding plants can be propagated in a jar of water.

Here's how.

Start with new growth cut in lengths of about 4 inches. A sharp knife works, or use thin-edged scissors. You will need plenty of stem to submerge, so remove any lower leaves. The stem bottoms should be deep into the water. Fill the jar to the rim and place in a windowsill for warmth and brightness. Within a few weeks, roots should emerge.

I start plants in rainwater, but filtered tap water works well too. Another option: After getting a good root system going, put your plant in a terracotta pot and fill with soil. Compact the soil a bit for best results.

Growing vegetation helps me ward off the wintertime blues. Some plants also help filter the air. Try Sansevieria, also known as mother-in-law's tongue. Just to assure peace at home I call it snake plant. A NASA clean air study showed Sansevieria has air purification qualities, removing toxins and producing oxygen. Bonus: There are 70 varieties of this hardy plant.

Try my tips for indoor growing:

Bright is right. Plants need light! Identify how much natural light

is available (and needed) for plants. A window is an ideal place.

Water them as needed. But not too much or too little. Never put plants in pots that don't have at least one hole in the bottom! When you water the plant, the water goes into the saucer and evaporates around the plant, making the surrounding air a bit more humid. This is especially helpful to the plant in winter.

Avoid accidents. Keep a saucer or tray underneath the plants to catch the drips from watering and condensation, which often occurs on the leaves during nighttime. Place a trivet underneath so the tray doesn't damage wooden or painted surfaces.

Pretty is an option. A decorative pot or planter that coordinates with the furnishings will enhance the beauty of the plant. Try this: Put about an inch of aquarium gravel in a larger tray to add color.

Know what will work best. In addition to Sansevieria, I suggest *Dracaena marginata* (dragon trees), *ficus* (both the large- and small-leaved varieties), *spathiphyllum* (peace lily) and umbrella plants. Avoid bird of paradise, bamboo, palm trees and ferns unless you can provide very good light and high additional humidity year-round.

Now get growing!

Your green-thumbed plumber,

Steve Huff

Owner, Steve Huff Plumbing

