

Sewage Spills Regulatory Codes & Fines

Allowing sewage to discharge to a gutter or storm drain may subject you to penalties and/or out-of-pocket costs to reimburse public agencies for clean-up efforts.

Here are the pertinent codes, fines, and agency contact information that apply.

**Orange County Health Care Agency
Environmental Health Section**
(714) 667-3600 or (714) 628-7008 after hours

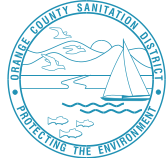
California Health and Safety Code, Sections 5410-5416

- No person shall discharge raw or treated sewage or other waste in a manner that results in contamination, pollution, or a nuisance.
- Any person who causes or permits a sewage discharge to any state waters:
 - must immediately notify the Local Health Officer of the discharge.
 - shall reimburse the Local Health Officer for services that protect the public's health and safety (water-contact receiving waters).
 - who fails to provide the required notice to the Local Health Officer is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished by a fine (between \$500–\$1,000) and/or imprisonment for less than one year.

**Regional Water Quality Control Board
Santa Ana Region**
(909) 782-4130

California Water Code, Article 4, Chapter 4, Sections 13268-13271
California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Division 3, Chapter 9.2,
Article 2, Sections 2250-2260

- Any person who causes or permits sewage in excess of 1,000 gallons to be discharged to state waters shall immediately notify the Office of Emergency Services at (800) 852-7550.
- Any person who fails to provide the notice required by this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished by a fine (less than \$20,000) and/or imprisonment for not more than one year.
- This subdivision shall apply to land discharges that would have resulted in a sewage discharge to state water, but for a public agency's emergency response or cleanup action.



This brochure was provided courtesy
of the Orange County Sanitation District (OCS&D).
For additional information, call (714) 962-2411,
or visit our website at www.ocsd.com

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Sewage Spills Reference Guide

courtesy of the
Orange County Sanitation District



Your Responsibility as a Private Property Owner

Residences
Businesses
Homeowner/Condominium Associations
Federal and State Complexes
Military Facilities

What is a Sewage Spill?

Sewage spills occur when the wastewater being transported via underground pipes overflows through a manhole, cleanout, and/or broken pipes. Sewage spills can potentially cause health hazards, cause damage to homes and businesses, and threaten the environment, local waterways, and beaches.

Common Causes of Sewage Spills

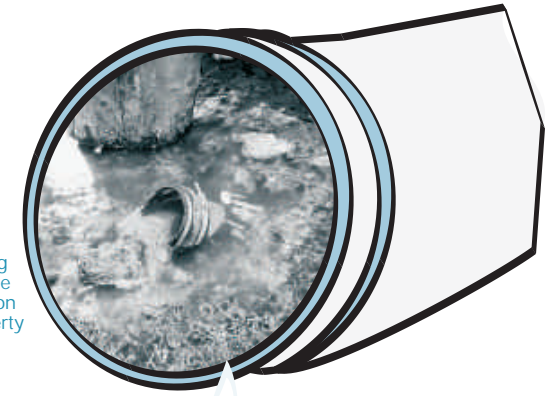
- Grease builds up and eventually blocks sewer pipes. Grease gets into the sewer from household drains, as well as, from poorly maintained commercial grease traps and interceptors. Grease is the most common cause of pipe blockages.
- Structure problems caused by tree roots in the lines, broken/cracked pipes, missing or broken cleanout caps, and/or undersized sewers, can cause blockages.
- Infiltration and inflow (I/I) impacts pipe capacity and is caused when groundwater or rainwater enters the sewer system through pipe defects and illegal connections.

You Are Responsible for a Sewage Spill Caused by a Blockage in Your Sewer Lines!

Time is of the essence in dealing with sewage spills. You are required to immediately:

- Control and minimize the spill. Keep spills contained on private property and out of gutters, storm drains, and public waterways by shutting off or not using the water.
- Clear the sewer blockage. Always wear gloves and wash your hands. Call a plumber if necessary.
- Notify your local Public Works Department. Reference phone numbers inside this brochure or those listed in the government section of the phone book.

Overflowing
cleanout pipe
located on
private property



You Could Be Liable

Allowing sewage from your home, business or property to discharge to a gutter or storm drain may subject you to penalties and/or out-of-pocket costs to reimburse public agencies for clean-up and enforcement efforts. See back for pertinent codes and fines that apply.

What to Look For

Sewage spills can be a very noticeable gushing of water from a manhole, or a slow water leak that may take time to be noticed. Don't dismiss wet areas that cannot be accounted for. Look for:

- Drain backups inside the building;
- Wet ground and water leaking around manhole lids on your street;
- Seeping water from cleanouts, outside drains; and
- Unusual odorous wet areas: sidewalks, external walls, ground/landscape around a building.

Caution

Keep people and pets away from the affected area. Untreated sewage has high levels of disease-causing viruses and bacteria. Call your local Health Care Agency listed on the back for more information.

If You See a Sewage Spill Occurring
Notify Your Local Public Works Department

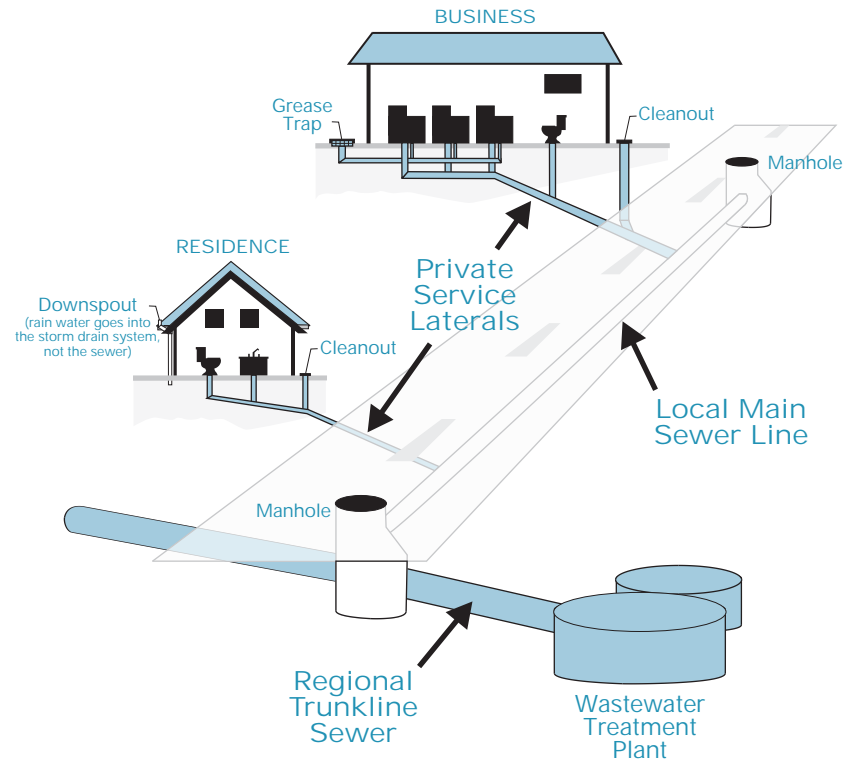
How a Sewer System Works

A typical sanitary sewer system is constructed of a network of pipes connecting to each building and transporting sewage to a wastewater treatment plant.

A property owner's sewer pipes are called service laterals and connect to larger local main and regional sewer lines.

Service laterals are the responsibility of the property owner and must be maintained by the property owner. Many city agencies have adopted ordinances requiring maintenance of service laterals. Check with your local public works department for more information.

Operation and maintenance of local and regional sewer lines are the responsibility of the local public works department and the sanitation district.



How You Can Prevent Sewage Spills

- 1 Never put grease down garbage disposals, drains, or toilets
- 2 Perform periodic cleaning to eliminate grease, debris, and roots in your service laterals
- 3 Repair any structural problems in your sewer system and eliminate any rainwater infiltration/inflow leaks into your service laterals



Preventing Grease Blockages

Dispose of grease properly! Do not put grease down drains. Scrape off plates, pans, etc. into grease cans for recycling or into trash bins for disposal.

Restaurants and large buildings, such as apartment complexes and commercial establishments, may have grease traps or interceptors to keep grease out of sewer pipes.

To work correctly, a grease trap or interceptor must be:

- Sized correctly (designed to handle the expected amount of grease)
- Installed properly (per local codes)
- Maintained properly (cleaned and serviced regularly)

Orange County Agency Responsibilities

- Local Public Works Department
Responsible for protecting city property and streets, other public areas, and the local storm drain system.
- County of Orange Health Care Agency
Responsible for protecting public health by closing beaches and food-service businesses if the spill poses a threat to public health.
- Regional Water Quality Control Board
Responsible for protecting State waters.
- Orange County Sanitation District (OCSD)
Responsible for collecting, treating, and disposing of wastewater, for northern and central Orange County.

You Could Be Liable for Not Protecting the Environment

Local and state agencies have legal jurisdiction and enforcement authority to ensure that sewage spills are remedied.

They may respond and assist with containment, relieve pipe blockages, and/or clean-up of the sewage spill, especially if the spill is flowing into storm drains or onto public property.

A property owner may be back-charged for costs incurred by these agencies responding to private property spills.



Report Sewage Spills!

City Public Works Departments

Anaheim	(714) 765-6860
Brea	(714) 990-7691
Buena Park	(714) 562-3655
Cypress	(714) 229-6760
Fountain Valley	(714) 593-4493
Fullerton	(714) 738-6897
Huntington Beach	(714) 960-8861
La Habra	(562) 905-9792
La Palma	(626) 458-4357
Newport Beach	(949) 644-3011
Orange	(714) 532-6484
Placentia	(714) 993-8245
Santa Ana	(714) 647-3380
Seal Beach	(562) 431-2527
Stanton	(714) 379-9222
Tustin	(714) 573-3150
Villa Park	(714) 998-1500
Yorba Linda	(714) 961-7170

City Sewering Agencies

Costa Mesa	(949) 631-1731
Garden Grove	(714) 741-5395
Irvine	(949) 453-5800
Los Alamitos/Rossmore	(562) 431-2223
Midway City	(714) 893-3553
Sunset Beach	(562) 493-9932
Uncorporated Areas in County of Orange North of Tustin	(714) 962-2411

Call the Orange County Sanitation District at (714) 962-2411 for more information on sewer system connections, permits, and wastewater treatment.