



# WHAT TO DO IF YOUR SANITARY SEWER OVERFLOWS

## Control the situation.

- **Do not use the water in your home.** Any water sent down the drain will go into a backed-up sewer pipe. This includes not flushing toilets or using household appliances that use water, sinks, showers, and drains.
- **Turn off water sources.** Shut off water sources to prevent additional sewage from entering your home.
- **Keep children and pets away.** Make sure kids and pets can't touch the sewage.
- **Do not touch raw sewage or items contaminated with sewage with bare hands.** Wear rubber gloves if you need to handle these items.
- **Ventilate the area.** Open windows and doors to improve ventilation and reduce the concentration of fumes.
- **Call your doctor if you feel sick.** If you have symptoms after breathing in fumes or being near the sewage, or have additional questions or concerns about your health after an overflow, call your doctor.

## Clean up the area.

### Consider hiring a contractor

Contractors are experts at this type of cleanup.

- **Call your homeowners insurance provider** who may provide cleanup companies on contract who can assist with property damages from overflows.
- **Contact your local public works department** for additional information and guidance.
- **Call and hire a professional water damage restoration company** if insurance is unable to provide one, or if you do not have insurance.

### If you clean up yourself

Be sure to protect your health by following proper hygiene guidelines:

- **Wear protective gear:** Goggles, gloves, boots, etc.
- **Wash your hands after cleaning.**
- **Disinfect and cover all open wounds before and after cleaning.**
- **Disinfect all contaminated surfaces with a mix of ¼ cup bleach for every gallon of water.** Never mix bleach with ammonia cleansers, as this produces chloramine vapors that can be extremely harmful.
- **Throw away items that cannot be washed or dry cleaned.** Allow interior area and items to air dry completely to prevent mold growth.
- **For minor spills outside the home:** Minor spills may be disinfected with garden lime. Follow the lime container's instructions for proper use.