

What to do if your sewer backs up and contaminates your home?

- Once a back-up is indicated, contact The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority immediately. While you are waiting for one of our crews to come out and assess the situation, please contact your neighbors to see if they are experiencing any problems also.
- If there is a problem with the main sewer line, PWSA is responsible to fix it. However, if there is a problem with the sewer lateral, the homeowner is responsible to fix it.
- Once the problem is corrected and the sewage has dissipated in your home, you may begin the clean-up process.

Steps to Clean Up the Contaminated Area

- Clean and disinfect washable surfaces that have come in contact with sewage. Wash with soap and water, then disinfect with a mixture of a quarter cup of household bleach per gallon of water.
- Discard upholstered furniture, mattresses, bedding and stuffed toys soaked in flood waters.
- Sweep or vacuum soaked and soiled carpeting, then shampoo it with a commercial rug cleaner.
- Clean, dry and check your furnace, water heater, washer, dryer and other appliances before using them. Don't handle electrical equipment in wet areas. Call a plumber or an electrician for professional service.
- To remove odors from refrigerators and freezers, use warm water with a detergent and wipe dry. If an odor persists, try a solution of one teaspoon of baking soda or one cup of household ammonia per gallon of water.
- Throw away all foods that have come in contact with flood waters.
- Make sure everyone involved in the flood cleanup has an up-to-date tetanus shot. Boosters are recommended every ten years.