

# SEWAGE BACKUP

## Who's Responsible?

Homeowners are responsible for the installation and maintenance of backflow valves. They can be installed by a licensed plumber and should be inspected yearly to make sure they're in good working order.

## Clean-Up Assistance

Although PWC cannot accept responsibility for property damage caused by sewage backups, in some cases we will offer assistance with the clean-up.



## Protect Your Home against Sewage Backup Don't Leave It to Chance

At PWC, we have an active program to maintain our sewer mains and prevent sewage backflow. But it's not always in our control. If people put grease and other foreign materials into our sewer system, it can create a blockage that causes sewage to back up – even into your home.

## How You Can Protect Your Home

Some homes are more susceptible to backflow. But there's a way you can help protect your home (or business). Installing a Backflow Valve is an inexpensive solution to avoid what could be an extremely disruptive problem, with extensive property damage.

The backflow valve is installed in your sewer lateral, close to where it leaves your house. It allows sewage to flow in one direction only (out of your home) and shuts automatically if flow is detected in the opposite direction, reducing the likelihood of sewage entering your home. The valve will re-open when normal flow is restored.



**Customer Service**  
483-1382

Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, excluding holidays  
1-877-Our PWC1 • 24-Hour Emergency

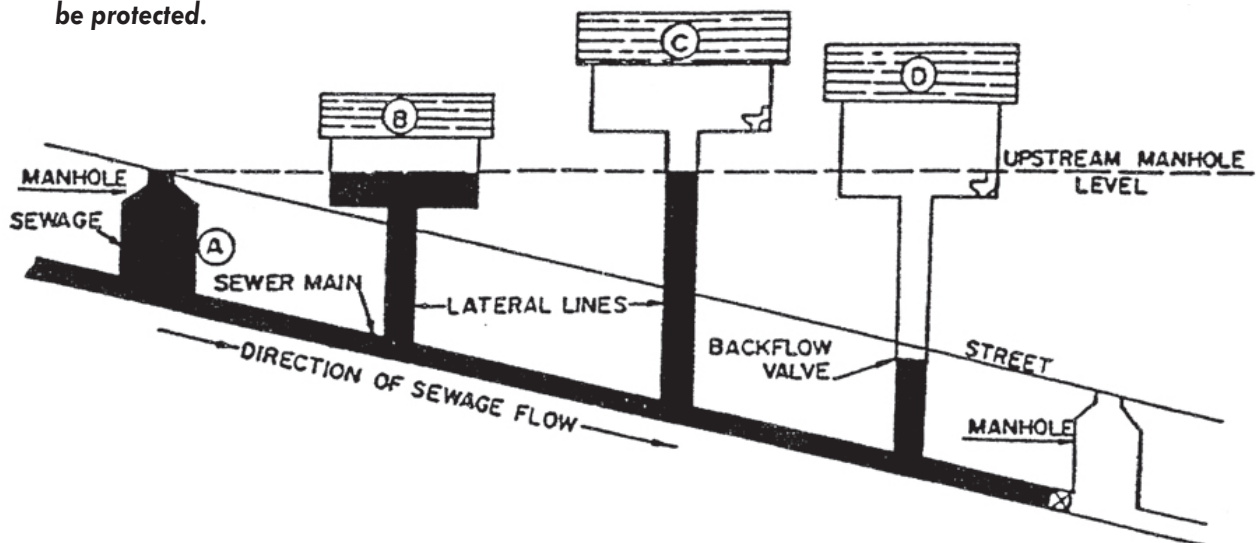
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03/07 1000 13369

## What Happens in a Sewage Backup

The diagram below illustrates what can occur during a sewage backup.

- A blockage occurs at the point marked X. Sewage begins backing up into the Sewer Main, and from the Main into the Lateral Lines (which carries sewage from the house to the Main).
- Under normal circumstances, the nearest UPSTREAM Manhole (see A) will allow sewage to overflow into the street before it can enter homes.
- However, if a house (see B) has any plumbing fixtures (floor drains, commodes, etc.) that are BELOW the elevation of the nearest upstream Manhole, sewage may enter that home before spilling into the street.
- A house with all plumbing fixtures ABOVE the elevation of Manhole A (see C), will not have a problem.
- A house with a Backflow Valve (see D) will be protected.



## Who Is Most at Risk

Homes (or other buildings) located below street level – or with plumbing fixtures in the basement – have the highest potential for experiencing backflow problems. Since the early 1930s, the North Carolina Building Code has required all buildings with plumbing fixtures located below the nearest upstream manhole to have a backflow valve. Older homes/building, however, may not have them. If you think you may need a Backflow Valve, (or have one that may not be in working order), contact your plumber.

