

## **Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Surveys**

WSA Collection System personnel conduct Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Surveys to evaluate the sewer system for potential problems such as ground water inflow and infiltration into the pipes, root infiltration into pipes and manholes, as well as structural problems within the system. This ongoing monitoring, utilizing video cameras and other detection tools, is used to develop condition assessments of the sewer lines to determine when repairs, rehabilitation or replacement is required.

### **Sanitary Sewer Smoke Testing**

Smoke testing is performed periodically as part of DDCWSA's ongoing sanitary sewer inspection program. Smoke testing helps to identify areas where water is entering the sanitary sewer system such as manholes that are not properly sealed, broken pipes, broken clean-outs, unauthorized connections from a storm water system, or other problem. Unauthorized water can cause an unnecessary load on the Wastewater Treatment Plants, and could potentially cause sanitary sewer backups.

### **Smoke Testing Safety**

During the testing, a non-toxic smoke is forced into the sewer lines in your neighborhood. This smoke leaves no residuals or stains and has no effect on plants or animals.

### **Smoke Testing Notification**

A door hanger or letter explaining this testing will be delivered to each property at least 24 hours prior to testing in the neighborhood.

A DDCWSA crew will perform the smoke testing. Crew members will wear WSA uniforms, have photo identification badges, and will drive WSA marked vehicles. The crew members will not request entry into your home, but will be available in the neighborhood to assist you if you have any questions about the process.

This testing cannot be conducted during rainy periods or windy conditions, so it can sometimes be delayed.

## Smoke Testing Frequently Asked Questions

DDCWSA will notify the local fire and police departments as to where they will be conducting sewer system smoke testing.

**Q. What is the purpose of smoke testing?**

**A.** Smoke testing is performed to find possible defects in the sewer system and illegal connections to the sewer system such as storm drains or roof drains. Smoke testing can help locate faulty pipes and sewer connections which can allow storm water or ground water to enter the sewer system, increasing the risk of sewer overflows and driving up wastewater treatment costs.

**Q. Is the smoke used for testing the sewer system harmful?**

**A.** No. It is not harmful to you, your pets or your plants, and it will not harm clothing, drapes, or furniture.

**Q. What should I do to prevent smoke from getting into my house?**

**A.** Make sure all your sinks, showers, bathtubs, toilets and other drains have had water run through them recently. Simply flush toilets and pour one quart of water into all drains. Make sure you check drains rarely used such as floor drains in basements or garages and bathrooms rarely used. This will ensure that the traps in the pipes contain water, which will help prevent smoke from flowing into your home.

**Q. If smoke gets into my home, how long will it take for the smoke to dissipate?**

**A.** It depends upon how much smoke enters the building. Open windows to provide ventilation and allow the smoke to dissipate more quickly.

**Q. I'm not going to be home during smoke testing and have pets in the house, what should I do?**

**A.** Although the smoke is not harmful to pets, leave several windows partially open for their comfort. If you have proper plumbing connections and all of the traps in your pipes have water in them, smoke should not enter your home.

**Q. Can the smoke testing activate the smoke alarms?**

**A.** Yes, smoke alarms may be activated during smoke testing if smoke enters your home due to one of the reasons described above. Make sure to open windows and/or doors for ventilation.

**Q. If my drains are filled and I still have smoke coming into my house, what should I do?**

**A.** This may indicate that your internal plumbing is not working properly. You should consider calling a plumber, but repairs to your internal plumbing are at your discretion.

**Q. How are WSA crews recognizable in the field?**

**A.** DDCWSA personnel are uniformed, carry identification badges, and are in WSA marked vehicles.