

REDUCE SEWER LINE OVERLOADS

Rainwater entering the sewer lines is a major cause of sewage spills. Too much rainwater overloads the sewer system to the point where untreated sewage spills out of manholes or even backs up into homes through toilets and drains.



Be sure that your rain gutter downspouts are NOT connected to the sewer system. The rainwater from your roof should flow to your yard or driveway. Sewers are not designed to handle this large volume of water.

Look for and check your "cleanouts." Cleanouts are usually small pipes (3" or 4" in diameter) that are used to access the sewer line to clean it. Be sure to replace missing or damaged cleanout caps to keep



Sewer cleanout with properly installed plug

rainwater out of the sewer system. (Remember that children love to throw rocks, toys and other sewer-clogging objects down uncapped cleanouts!)

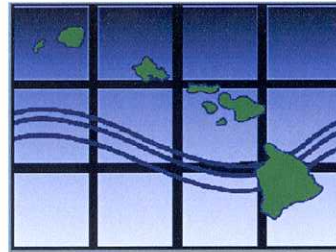
Check to see that deck, yard or other outdoor drains are not connected to the sewer. Be sure that pool or pond overflow drains are also not connected. These connections violate the plumbing code and are illegal. A plumber can assist in checking your piping.

To prevent overloading of sewer lines, NEVER drain flooded areas by removing sewer manhole covers or cleanout caps.



For more information about Preventing Sewage Overflows please visit:

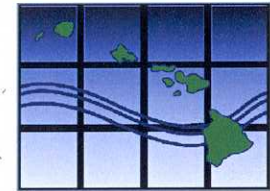
www.hwea.org



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Write or email us if you have a question on water pollution issues or if your group or organization would like us to do a presentation.

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HAWAII WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION



Protect Hawaii's Health and Environment!

Help Reduce Our Sewer Bills!

WHY PREVENT SEWAGE OVERFLOWS?

In a typical year, there are over 400 sewage overflows from Hawaii's sewer systems. Spills of untreated sewage can enter streams and the ocean, endangering public health and spoiling our environment.



Overflows from sewer lines caused by clogged and overloaded pipes are costly to clean up, cause traffic jams, and increase your sewer fees. Major sewage spills that cause beach closures hurt our tourism industry. When a sewage spill occurs, everyone loses!



WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SEWERS AND STORM DRAINS?

Sewer lines are a completely different set of pipes from storm drains. Storm drains transport storm water (rainwater) to streams and the ocean with little or no treatment. Wastewater (sewage) from toilets, sinks, showers, washing machines, etc. is handled separately by our sewers and wastewater treatment plants. Sewage must be treated to make it safe for disposal or reuse. Sewage needs to get to the treatment plants without spilling on our roads and into storm drains.

Rainwater needs to be kept out of sewers, and sewage and other pollutants out of storm drains. Trash must be kept out of both sewers and storm drains!

WHAT CAUSES SEWAGE OVERFLOWS?

Sewage overflows (spills) are caused by clogged pipes and/or too much flow.

Clogging of pipes is caused by blockages from fats, oils and grease as well as trash, roots and other undesirable objects in the sewer lines. Overloading of sewers (too much flow) is most often caused by excessive rainwater getting into the sewer system.



Grease on the walls of a sewer

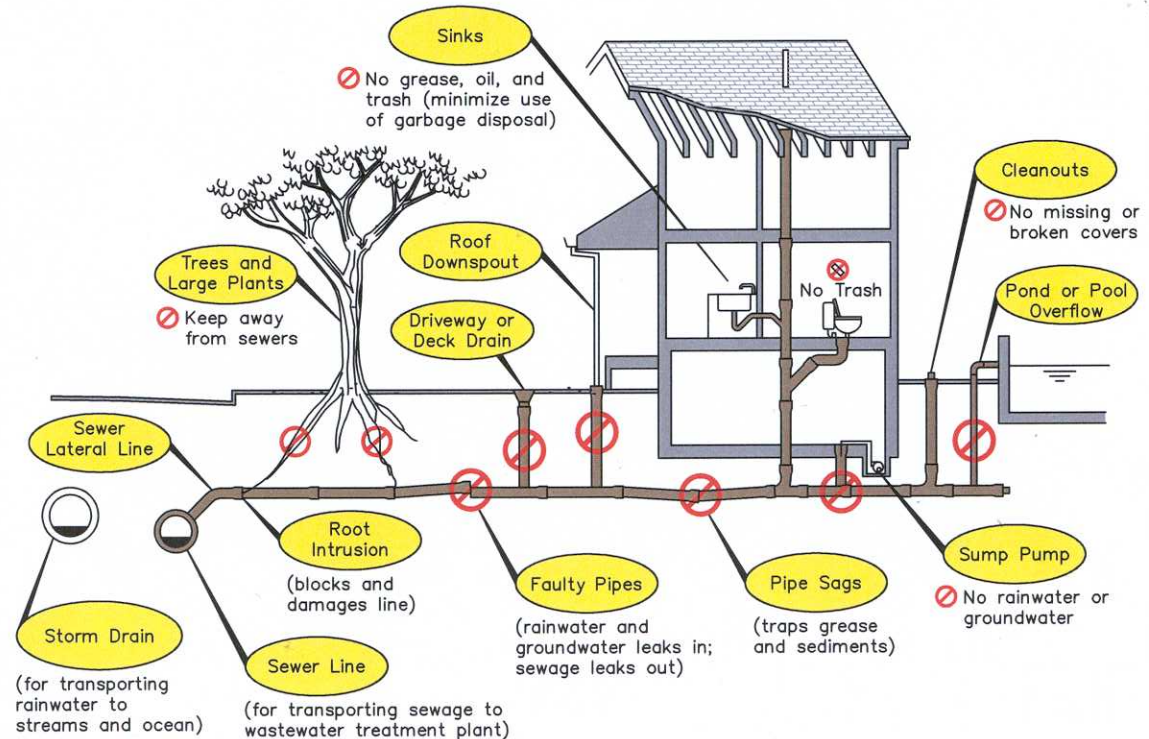
Illustrated below are typical causes of sewage spills and what you can do to help prevent them.

HELP KEEP SEWERS FROM CLOGGING

Grease, cooking oil and solid objects should NEVER be put down your drains or toilets.

Put grease and cooking oil in a disposable container holding absorbents such as paper towels or napkins, then throw it in the trash. The absorbent material keeps grease and oil from leaking out and causing a mess.

Solid objects like food wastes, wrappers, cotton balls, paper towels, and facial tissue should always go into the trash. Even a cotton swab can combine with hair and grease to clog sewer pipes. Only toilet tissue, which breaks down quickly, is designed for flushing down toilets. Toilets are NOT trash cans!



Help Prevent Sewage Spills!

Keep grease, trash, rainwater and roots out of our sewer system!