

## What Austin needs to know about sewage overflows

### Causes of Sewage Overflows

The five top causes of raw sewage overflows are grease blockage, damaged pipes, vandalism, tree roots, and infiltration from groundwater and rainwater.

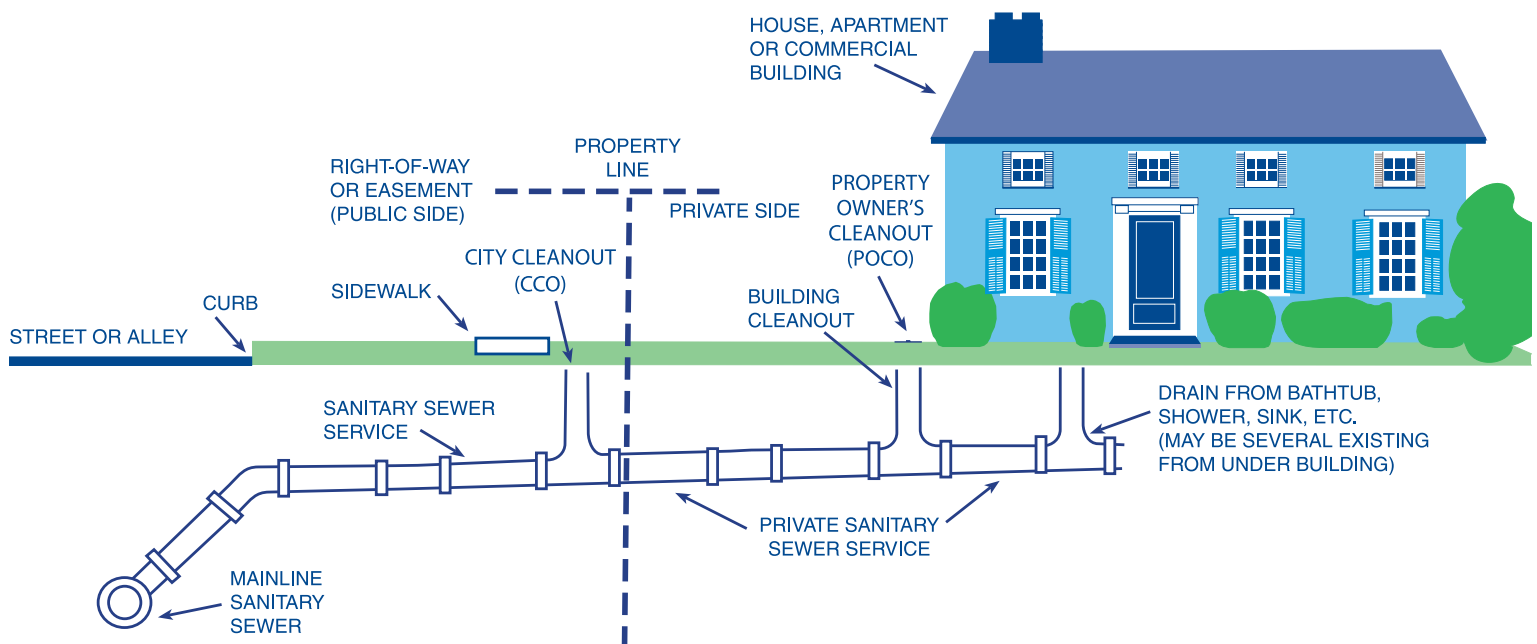


### Does the City Take Care of the Problem for Me?

Austin Water will attempt to assist you with the sewage overflow issue. However, our actions to stop the overflow may not correct the problem. Sewage overflows are often the result of old or defective private plumbing which can include broken pipes, blockages caused by grease and other materials. When this happens, customers are required to obtain a plumbing permit and repair or replace their private wastewater line. For information regarding permitting requirements and financial assistance options, contact the Private Lateral Program at 512-972-0069.



*Sewage overflow at an Austin apartment complex.*



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Your source for information and programs brought to you by Austin Water.

## What Happens if I Cannot Stop the Overflow?

The property owner is responsible for managing overflows caused by defects in the private wastewater line. However, to protect the public's health and safety, Austin Water may manage your overflow until you are able to control it or stop it. If this occurs, you will be billed for the costs incurred by the utility.

Please be aware that it is illegal to discharge sewage or wastewater to the City of Austin storm drainage system or a waterway. Legal action may be initiated by the Watershed Protection Department (WPD) for polluting discharges and those not sufficiently remediated.

Overflows caused by defects in city-owned pipes or severe weather events are the responsibility of the City and will be repaired at no cost to you.

## Sewer Overflow Prevention

Homeowners can assist in preventing overflows by:

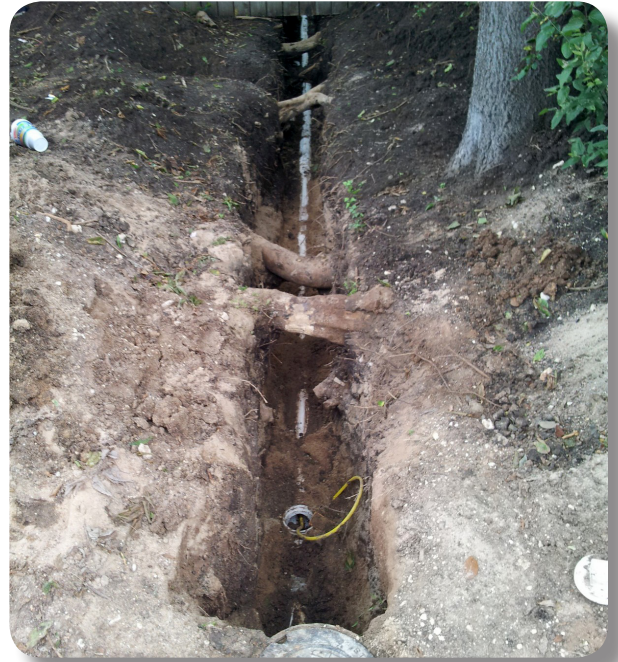
- Not pouring grease down your drain
- Not attaching your storm water drain or rain water gutters to the sanitary sewer system.

## In the Event of a Sewer Overflow

It is important to know where your property clean out is located. Refer to diagram on other side. In the event of a sewer overflow you should stop using any water, contact the Austin Water Dispatch Office at 512-972-1000, and remove the clean out cap to reduce pressure and minimize sewage back-ups into your home or property. If possible, divert active sewage overflows away from any storm drains or where it can reach waterways.



*The property owner's cleanout cover is typically 4" in diameter.*



*Change to tree roots are one of the top 5 causes of sewage overflows.*



*Sewage overflows are a threat to human health and can negatively impact to the value of your property.*

## Phone numbers to remember

Private Lateral Program: 512-972-0069

Watershed Protection Department 24 Hour Hot Line: 512-974-2550

Austin Water Dispatch: 512-972-1000

Claims Department: 512-974-2268



**For more information please visit our web site, [www.austintexas.org](http://www.austintexas.org)**