

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 18, 2017

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Sewer Backup? Five Things You Need to Know

CINCINNATI – On April 16, the Cincinnati area was once again hit with a massive rain storm. The west side took the brunt of this rain, which was estimated as a 50- to 100-year storm. The hardest hit areas were between Delhi Township and Westwood.

MSD is currently investigating more than 300 reports and counting of sewer backups.

This is the third large storm in seven months. The first two, August 28, 2016 and March 1, 2017, affected thousands of citizens across Hamilton County. Many people suffered significant damages to their homes and possessions.

In 2014, the U.S. EPA published a report showing a 37% increase in rainstorm intensity in our region over the last decade. This trend, if it continues, will have a significant negative impact on our community. Our sewer system was built – like other sewer systems across the nation – to handle a 10-year rain storm, not storms of the magnitude and intensity we have been experiencing.

Here are five things you need to know if you have experienced a sewer backup:

1. **You must report your sewer backup to MSD within 24 hours of the event.**

You can report sewer backups 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by phone at (513) 352-4900 or online at sbu.msdbg.org.

2. If possible, report sewer backups online in lieu of calling.

MSD's telephone hotline, (513) 352-4900, is currently experiencing an extremely high volume of calls related to the rain storm. If possible, please use our online reporting system at sbu.msdc.org in lieu of calling the hotline.

3. MSD will respond to your report ASAP, but delays are likely.

All available MSD field crews are out responding to reports of sewer backups. Due to the high volume of reports, it could be 1-2 days before we can send an MSD crew out to investigate your property. If the backup is determined to be caused by the public sewer system, MSD will schedule a free cleaning of your property.

4. You can arrange for your own cleanup, but reimbursement is not guaranteed.

You can choose to hire your own professional cleanup contractor. If MSD refers you for a cleanup after its investigation, you will be reimbursed for reasonable cleanup costs. Please note that MSD does not reimburse for self-cleaning. However, you will not be reimbursed for cleanup costs if the backup is caused by overland flooding or an issue with your private building sewer.

5. Document your property damage.

If you intend to submit a claim to MSD for property damage, please thoroughly document damages to your property to the best of your ability by:

- Photographing the flooded area.
- Photographing where the water is entering the building.
- Photographing structural damages to your property (e.g., dry wall, paneling, flooring, carpet, furnace, hot water heater).
- Creating an inventory list of personal property that is damaged or destroyed.
- Photographing personal property on the inventory list that is damaged or destroyed.

Only documented damages are eligible for reimbursement. Claim forms are available online at sbu.msdc.org or by calling (513) 244-5100.

For more information about MSD's Sewer Backup program, including cleanup and damage claims assistance, please visit sbu.msdc.org.

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