

EMERGENCY SEWER BACKUP ACTION PLAN

Sewage backing up into your house? Follow these safety-first steps while arranging professional help.

IMMEDIATE DANGER: If the area has exposed wiring, submerged outlets or appliances, rising water, or another life-threatening hazard, stay out and contact emergency services.

1. STOP USING WATER

Do not flush toilets or use sinks, showers, dishwashers, or washing machines. More water entering the drain system may worsen the backup.

2. KEEP PEOPLE AND PETS AWAY

Avoid contact with sewage and contaminated materials. Keep children and pets out of the affected area.

3. AVOID ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

Do not enter standing water near electrical equipment. Never step into water to switch off a breaker; get qualified help if power cannot be isolated from a dry, safe location.

4. AVOID RISKY DIY ATTEMPTS

Do not pour chemical drain openers into backed-up fixtures, open a pressurized sewer cleanout, or dismantle pipes.

5. REQUEST SEWER SERVICE

Tell the contractor where the backup is occurring, whether sewage is still entering, and whether multiple drains are affected. Contact the local sewer utility if a public sewer issue may be involved.

6. DOCUMENT DAMAGE SAFELY

Take photos only from a safe, uncontaminated location. Contact your insurer and ask about professional cleanup and sanitation.

NEED HELP NOW?

Call a local qualified sewer service provider. Ask whether urgent appointments are available. Do not use affected plumbing until the problem is assessed.

What to tell the sewer contractor: Address and contact number | Where sewage appears | When it began | Whether multiple fixtures are affected | Any prior sewer camera inspection.

Safety references: U.S. EPA, Sewage Backups: What to Do (EPA 325-N-06-001); CDC guidance on electrical hazards and sewage-contaminated water. This is general emergency guidance, not a diagnosis or substitute for professional emergency assistance.