



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 25, 2016

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Got a Sewer Backup? Call MSD First at 352-4900

*Also, watch our new video and play our new game
to learn more about sewer backups*

CINCINNATI – With the help of a funny, animated orange cat, the Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati (MSD) is spreading the word about its Sewer Backup Response program. If you live in MSD’s service area, you will be receiving a magnet and a card in the mail over the next month.

The mailing encourages MSD customers to report a sewer backup in their home or business by calling (513) 352-4900, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

MSD will investigate the sewer backup to determine who is responsible: MSD or the owner of the property. MSD will also explain what services are available to you if MSD is responsible, such as cleanup assistance and payment of damage claims. In addition, properties subject to reoccurring backups may be eligible for the installation of sewer backup prevention devices.

MSD has offered a Sewer Backup Response program (SBU), the first of its kind in the nation, to MSD customers since 2004. MSD is required to provide the program *and* publicize it as part of its federal Consent Decree with the U.S. EPA.

To help increase public awareness of sewer backups and offer a fun way to answer common questions, MSD recently launched an interactive website which includes a video, game, blog postings and an animated cat called Puddles.

Called “Do Your Part Cincinnati,” the website explains the different causes of sewer backups, the responsibility of property owners to maintain their private building sewers (the sewer from the home to the main public sewer) and MSD’s sewer backup response program, which covers backups caused by capacity issues or blockages in the main public sewer.

Ombudsman Amanda Toole of the Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio, who oversees MSD’s sewer backup program, recently submitted a [report to the U.S. District Court](#). In it, she says she is “pleased with MSD’s efforts to attempt new strategies and broaden their outreach” through the new website and “satisfied with the efforts MSD is making under the SBU Program.”

Consent Decree progress reports are available on the [Reports page](#) of the Project Groundwork website.

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Since the inception of the SBU program, MSD has cleaned more than 3,500 properties following a sewer backup and covered nearly \$8 million in property damage. MSD has also protected more than 800 properties from future backups from the public sewer system.

On average, MSD responds to more than 4,000 service requests a year related to potential sewer backups. The vast majority of reported sewer backups are caused by private building sewers that have failed, or are blocked by tree roots, grease or other “non-flushable” objects.

MSD is working to reduce and eliminate sewer backups in the public sewer system through Project Groundwork, a multi-year initiative that includes hundreds of sewer improvement and stormwater control projects across Hamilton County. For more information about Project Groundwork, visit www.projectgroundwork.org.

For more information about MSD's SBU program, visit call.msdbg.org or call (513) 352-4900, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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