



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MSD Responding to Hundreds of Sewer Backups Following Historic Rainfall Event

CINCINNATI – Hundreds of reports of sewer backups were called in to the Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati (MSD) on July 28 as the result of a huge rain storm that hit the Cincinnati area in the early morning hours.

Most sewer backups were concentrated in the Mt. Washington/Anderson Township area, where nearly 4 inches of rain fell in three hours.

MSD crews were out from 5:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday working their way through investigations at nearly 200 residences and businesses. MSD was unable to complete about 40 of the investigations before the day's end, but crews were out in the field again early Friday morning. MSD has contacted all customers they were unable to service.

“MSD understands that no one wants to experience or deal with sewage in their basement,” said Mike Pittinger, who runs MSD’s wastewater collection division. “Please be patient – we are responding to all callers as quickly as possible.”

Please note: If customers want to initiate cleanup efforts with a restoration contractor on their own, MSD will reimburse them for reasonable costs, provided the sewer backup was caused by a capacity issue in the public sewer.

MSD has offered a Sewer Backup Response program (SBU) to MSD customers since 2004. The program provides:

- Free cleanup assistance for properties, provided the sewer backup was caused by the public sewer. Property owners are responsible for backups caused by blockages or failure of their private building sewer.
- Payment of damage claims, when eligibility criteria are met.
- Protection from future sewer backups for qualifying homes with a history of sewer backups.

On average, MSD responds to around 3,000 - 4,000 service requests a year related to potential sewer backups. The vast majority of sewer backups are actually caused by private building sewers that have failed, or are blocked by tree roots, grease or other “non-flushable” objects.

Sewage backups caused by the public sewer are primarily related to a lack of capacity in the sewer line. During heavy rains, the sewer system can fill up with stormwater, overwhelming the ability of the sewer to carry the flow to a treatment plant. This can result in sewer overflows into local streams and rivers and backups into the street and homes and other buildings.

MSD is working to reduce sewer backups related to 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, including cleanup and damage claims assistance, or to report a sewer backup, visit call.msdc.org or call (513) 352-4900, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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