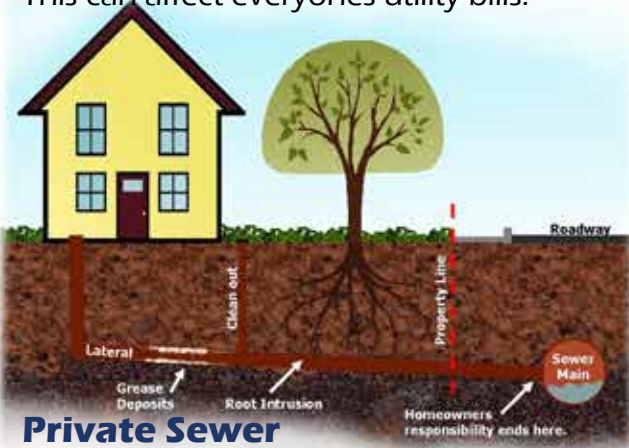


Why you should care:

Our Wastewater Treatment Facility is publically owned, which means we all pay for the associated costs. Proper sewage treatment is vital in protecting everyone from water borne diseases and protecting the environment from pollution. This important job is not cheap; we all pay for it. We can work together to help keep costs down by not contributing to the problem. Clogs in City sewer lines from grease or from other materials cost money to be cleared out. This can affect everyone's utility bills.



Private Sewer Lateral Maintenance

Property owners are fully responsible for maintaining adequate sewage flow to and through the sewer lateral from the structure to the City's sewer main. When failure or stoppage of a sewer lateral occurs, City crews will respond only to check the City's sewer main to verify that the sewer main is open and sewage is flowing. If the sewer main is found to be clear, it is the responsibility of the property owner to call a licensed plumber or drain cleaning service to correct the problem. For questions, call the Public Works Department.

Rats

Yes, it's true. Rats love to live in sewers. It is not just a big-city problem, it happens in Dallas, too. What can you do to prevent them from coming into your home from the sewer? Keep your kitchen sink rinsed and clean and use garbage disposals as little as possible. Rinse out your kitchen sink once or twice a month with 1 cup of baking soda followed by 1 cup of vinegar and rinse with boiling water. If one comes up through your toilet, close the lid and flush. Call the Public Works Department if you've encountered a sewer rat, we can take steps to help get rid of them. Nothing is 100% effective, but these measures may help keep them at bay.



Household Hazardous Waste

Polk County holds two Household Hazardous Waste events every year. One in Dallas every May and one in Independence every October. Contact Polk County for details at 503.623.9237. While waiting for a collection event, keep paints, used motor oil, and other hazardous chemicals in a secure place in your home out of reach of children. And please, don't flush them down the drain.

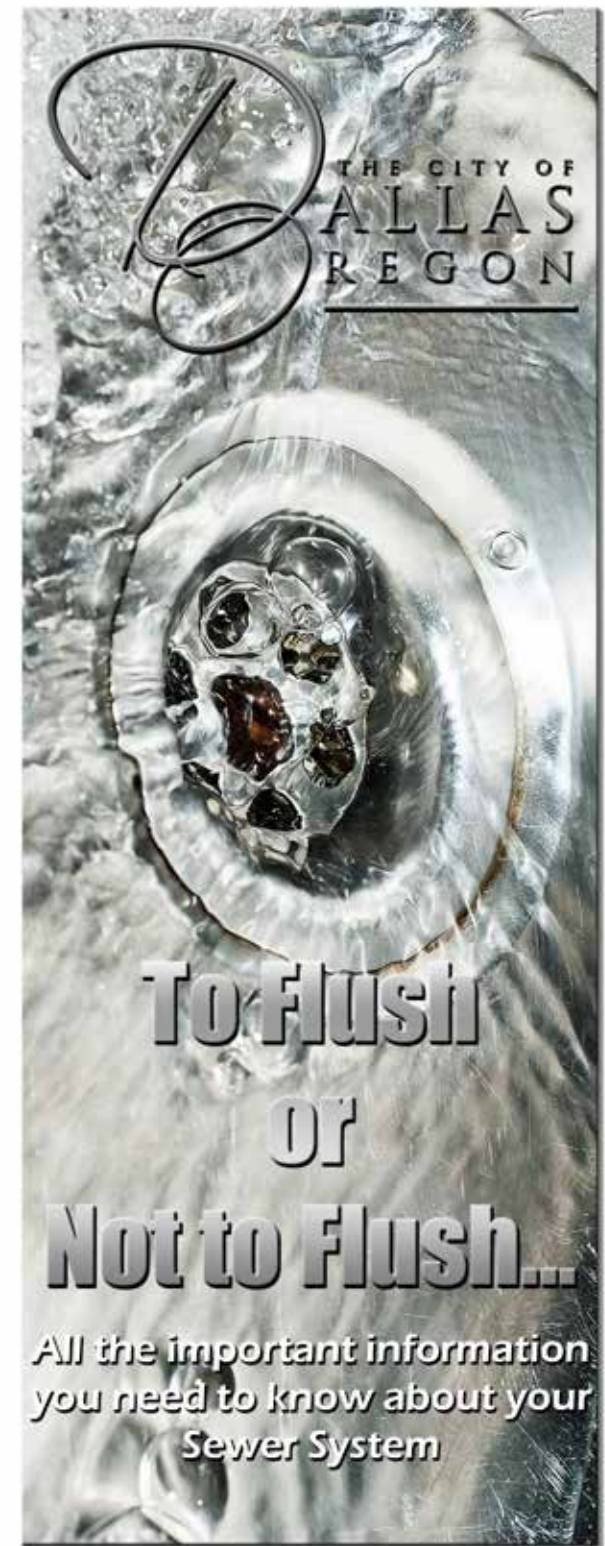


Wastewater Treatment

When wastewater (sewage) is flushed from household toilets, drained from sinks, showers and bathtubs, garbage disposals, washing machines or dish-washers, it leaves your home and flows through the community sanitary sewer system to the Wastewater Treatment Facility. This infrastructure includes miles of underground pipes and pumps maintained by the City to provide transportation of raw sewage from homes and businesses to the Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Dallas has a state of the art Wastewater Treatment Facility that removes pollutants from water used in homes, small businesses, industries, and other facilities. It goes through three process including screening, bacteria treatment to remove all organic matter, and disinfectant using ultraviolet light. The treated water is released back to Rickreall Creek.

The city has contracted with CH2M to operate and maintain this system. The funding of operation and maintenance comes from monthly utility bills.



TO FLUSH OR NOT TO FLUSH...THAT IS THE QUESTION

Wipes

The generic term “wet wipes” includes the pre-moistened wipes used in lieu of toilet paper, baby wipes, premoistened towelettes, and disinfection wipes used in kitchens and bathrooms. Their marketing and use has exploded over the last several years and many brands claim to be flushable even though they do not break down like regular toilet paper in the sewer system. They tend to catch and snag in the pipes, forming blockages and back-ups, clogging pumps, and leading to all sorts of unpleasant and expensive problems. Ideally, the only thing that should be flushed other than human waste is toilet paper. They may feel soft on skin, but they are hard on the infrastructure.

Fat, Oil, and Grease (FOG)

Fat not only clogs our arteries, it clogs our sewer pipes too. This can lead to big problems with sewer flows. Please do not put fats, oils or grease into your sink, toilet, or garbage disposal. This can damage your pipes and cause big blockages in the public system. Let it cool, and then scrape it into the trash.

Drugs

Wastewater treatment plants are designed to remove conventional pollutants such as human waste and other biodegradable organic materials from waters. They were not designed to remove even low concentrations of synthetic pollutants such as pharmaceuticals. Everyday unwanted or expired medicine is disposed of via indoor drains, down the sink or in the toilet. The small amount that passes through the treatment system can end up in streams. A number of studies have shown impacts of pharmaceuticals on aquatic life. The City of Dallas is seeking to reduce the amount of prescription or over the counter drugs disposed of in wastewater and ending up in Rickreall Creek. The best choice for environmentally friendly disposal is to take unwanted medicine to a collection location or return them to the pharmacy.

You can drop off old, expired or unused prescriptions at:

Dallas City Hall, Finance Office, First Floor, 187 SE Court Street, Dallas, OR 97338.

For more information or other questions about pharmaceutical disposal, please contact Polk County Environmental Health at 503.623.9327.

Household items

Sewer systems are not waste disposal units. Items labeled as disposable are not necessarily safe to flush. Some items may make it through your household plumbing and still cause serious problems further down in the system.

Never Flush:

- Wet wipes (even those labeled as “flushable”)
- Fats, oils or grease
- Prescription or over the counter medications
- Feminine hygiene products including tampons and applicators
- Cotton balls, swabs, band-aids or dental floss
- Condoms
- Hair
- Razors, needles, or syringes
- Disposable diapers or baby wipes
- Household hazardous materials such as anti-freeze, automotive chemicals, fertilizer, herbicides or pesticides
- Paint, paint thinner or wood stain
- Cat litter (even “flushable”)
- Goldfish or other small animals
 - Band-aids

