

Municipality of Penn Hills  
**INSTRUCTIONS FOR SEWER BACKUPS**

## **CLEANUP**

Because of the unsanitary nature of a sewer backup in the home, it is essential that the area in the home where the backup occurred be cleaned and disinfected as soon as possible.

There are many private companies in the area that can do this for you properly. Check the Yellow Pages under the listing "Fire and Water Damage Restoration" for a list of companies. Some companies will also inspect and repair major appliances (furnaces, hot water heaters, washers and dryers), **which should be done prior to operating them if they may have been damaged by water.** Keep a receipt of your payment to the cleaning or restoration company for insurance purposes, and also take pictures of any damage to document your loss.

Household items exposed to the sewage will most likely need to be discarded. For insurance purposes, it is helpful to make a list of all discarded items, and if possible, take Pictures of items prior to discarding them.

It is not recommended that you attempt to clean up a major sewer backup yourself due to the unsanitary conditions of a backup. In the event that the discharge into the basement is minimal and you decide to clean and disinfect the area yourself, it is recommended that you wear rubber gloves when handling contaminated items, and thoroughly disinfect the exposed area with a strong disinfectant.

## **INSURANCE**

1. Contact your Homeowner's Insurance agent as soon as possible. Many homeowner's policies include insurance coverage for sewer backups.
2. You may consider filing an insurance claim with the Municipality if the backup was not caused by a problem in your lateral line. If the backup was caused by a problem with the Municipality's main sewer line, and this is a recurring problem, the Municipality's insurance carrier will evaluate your claim to determine whether property damages from the sewer backup will be reimbursed. If you wish to file a claim with the Municipality, please call the Penn Hills Municipal Administration Department, (412) 342-1086 or (412) 342-1087.

## **PREVENTION**

1. Regular cleaning of your sanitary sewer lateral lines may prevent future backups.
2. In some cases, a Backflow Prevention Valve may be helpful in the elimination of sewer backups. To find out if this might be helpful in your case, please contact the Municipal Water Pollution Control Department, (412) 798-2172.