

Smoke Testing of Sanitary Sewers Frequently Asked Questions

As a method of identifying and correcting problems in the Village of Perry Sanitary Sewer System, the Project team will conduct smoke testing throughout the entire Village of Perry. **If you have received this information, your area will be smoke tested.**

Frequently Asked Questions About the Smoke Testing Process:

What is smoke testing and why is it conducted?

Smoke testing is one of the most efficient and cost-effective methods of locating sources of inflow and infiltration problems with sewers. The non-toxic smoke will help locate places where storm and other surface waters enter the sanitary sewers.

Smoke testing is conducted by placing a blower over a centrally located manhole and forcing non-toxic smoke-filled air through the sewer lines. The smoke under pressure will fill the main line plus any connections, then follow the path of any leaks to the ground's surface, quickly revealing the source of infiltration and inflow (I&I).

I&I occurs when groundwater or rainwater enters the sewer lines through cracks, breaks, and/or areas not intended to drain to the sewer system. This additional water robs the pipes of needed capacity and causes overflows and flooding. The smoke will be noticeable wherever there is a leak in a sanitary sewer pipe, such as a crack in a sewer pipe, a cross-connection between a storm sewer and a sanitary sewer, where a roof drain is connected to the sanitary sewer, from a broken cleanout cap, or from a defective or damaged manhole.

Is the smoke harmful?

No. The smoke is specially manufactured for testing and is not dangerous or toxic, it leaves no residue or stains, and should not affect plants or pets. Visible smoke and/or smoke odor will last only a few minutes in cases of proper ventilation.



What if smoke enters the house or building?

The smoke has a very distinctive, but not unpleasant, odor. During testing, do not be concerned if you see smoke coming from your rooftop sewer vents. This is normal. Smoke should exit the vent stacks of the surrounding properties within the testing area. If traces of smoke or its odor are detected in your building or home, it is an indication that gases from the sewer system could also be entering. Sewer gases can be dangerous, and some of these gases have no odor or color, and can enter a building undetected.

If you observe smoke in your building during testing, we urge you to contact your plumber to have him try to locate the source of the leak that you have witnessed and take the appropriate corrective measures. Location, identification, and correction of the source of smoke that enters your building should quickly be addressed.

Can smoke block the sewer?

No. The smoke will be generated by lighting a smoke candle which emits a stream of smoke. The smoke is a vaporous substance and cannot clog a sewer pipe.

What should I do to prepare for smoke testing?

To avoid smoke from unnecessarily entering your building, we suggest you run water into all of your drains (approximately 1-2 gallons of water), the day prior to the date that smoke testing will be conducted in your area, especially those drains that are used infrequently, such as basement and garage drains.

I will not be home during smoke testing and have pets in the house. What should I do?

The smoke is not harmful to pets. It would be a good idea to leave several windows partially open for ventilation, should any smoke enter the building. If you have proper plumbing connections and all of the traps have water in them, there should not be any problems.

Will rodents be smoked out?

No. However, the smoke will detect broken building sewers where rodents might have access. Owners will be notified to repair broken building sewers.

Who should I contact if I have any questions?

If you have any questions regarding this Project, please contact the **Village of Perry Office** at (585) 237-2216 or Email at mjensen@villageofperry.com