



## TOWN OF BETHEL – UTILITIES DEPARTMENT

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### What is a sewer blow-back?

Cleaning the sewer system is required to ensure it functions properly and to perform rehabilitation work. During the process, air pressure is created inside the sewer pipe as a result of the cleaning process. Most of the time, this pressurized air escapes with no impact. However, in some instances, the air can only escape through the service connection between your house and the City's sewer system and **through the internal plumbing vent in your house**, usually without incident. However, if this vent passage is partially blocked, air pressure may escape through a toilet, floor drain or the nearest exit it can find. This can result in the release of unpleasant odors and, in rare occasions, blowing the water out of toilets and drains into a home or business. When this water is released, this is known as a 'blow-back'.

### What to do if you experience a 'blow-back'?

Recovery from a 'blow back' event is simply a matter of removing any debris and the cleaning of toilets, sinks, baths, showers, that may have been impacted with the sewage water. You may then continue normal use.

### Do I need to worry about my health?

Sewage 'blow-back' events that involve only the discharge of toilet or drain water onto walls or surfaces is not an immediate health risk. However, it is important that all sewage water, any resulting debris and surfaces that have come in contact with this water be promptly and thoroughly cleaned. This will require the removal of any debris, the cleaning of surfaces with a soap solution and the disinfection of hard surfaces with a diluted household bleach/water solution. Regular household cleaning products are all that is needed. Rubber gloves are recommended. Never mix ammonia and chlorine products such as household bleach.

***Keep the toilet lids closed to minimize the effects of blow-back.***