



Public Health
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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District
www.c-uphd.org

Sewage Back-Up

Wastewater is broken down into three categories. These categories are defined below:

Gray Water Sewage: Discharge from washing machines, dish machines, hand wash sink basins, food preparation sinks, three compartment sinks, and showers. Gray water can contain chemical contaminants which can be harmful to human health if ingested or contact is made with human skin.

Black Water Sewage: Wastewater containing human excreta such as fecal matter and urine. This is a positive public health concern due to the fact that it can contain harmful bacteria such as Cholera, Typhoid, Hepatitis, E. Coli, and Norovirus.

Clear Water Waste: Discharge from ice bins, ice machines, refrigeration units, freezer units, and air conditioning equipment. This is not considered sewage.

Gray water sewage and black water sewage may contain animal and human waste. The waste of both animals and humans may carry disease causing microorganisms that, when ingested, have the potential to cause severe illness. It is important to follow the steps shown below to prevent the spread of illness within a food establishment.

! - Facility is required to contact the Health Department. A site visit will need to be conducted by an

CONTINUOUS OVERFLOW OF SEWAGE-

DISCONTINUE ALL OPERATIONS IMMEDIATELY. DO NOT SERVE FOOD TO CUSTOMERS.

- 1. Contact the Health Department.**
- 2. Keep all employees away from affected area(s)**
- 3. Contact local plumber to resolve situation.**
- 4. Discard any food or single service items that may have come into contact with sewage.**
- 5. Once the issue has been resolved, clean-up the affected area. See "Cleaning Procedures" below**

Environmental Health Specialist to assure that the facility is deemed safe for the preparation, storage, and handling of food items. The facility will be allowed to resume operations AFTER approval.

PROCEDURES FOR SPECIFIC SEWAGE BACK-UP SCENARIOS:

General – Fixtures are slow to drain; small drain clogs

- Place fixture/appliance out of service
- Remove the obstruction or call a service professional
- Thoroughly clean any spills with soap and water. Follow with a sanitizing solution containing no more than 100 parts per million of available chlorine bleach

Hand Washing Sinks-Do not drain

- Place fixture out of service
 - Immediately remove obstruction or call service professional
 - Use hand sinks located in other areas of the facility until issue is resolved
- OR**
- Set-up a temporary hand washing station consisting of a water cooler with spigot filled with hot water (86-120°F), soap, paper towels, and discard bucket. [Click here for temporary hand washing illustration.](#)
- OR**
- If temporary hand washing is unavailable and hand sinks are not easily accessible to employees, discontinue operations until issue is resolved.

Toilet Facilities- Do not flush

- Place fixture out of service
- Make the necessary repairs or call a service professional for assistance
- Facility may remain in operation if other toilet rooms are available for employee and customer use
- If no other toilets are available, discontinue operations until issue is resolved.
- If toilets are continuously overflowing, see section entitled “Continuous Overflow of Sewage” for further instruction.

Culinary Sinks- Sinks required for thawing and vegetable/fruit preparation do not drain.

- Place fixture out of service
- Remove clog or contact service professional
- Thaw food items in the refrigerator, cook from frozen, or defrost in microwave.
- Use pre-washed/pre-packaged vegetables and fruit

OR

- Use canned fruit and vegetables

OR

- Temporarily modify the menu until the issue is resolved
- If temporary modifications are not feasible to the operation, discontinue food preparation and service until issue is resolved
- Once the issue has been resolved, sanitize culinary sinks with a sanitizing solution containing 50-100 parts per million (ppm) of liquid bleach. Be sure to have sanitizer test strips available to determine concentration.

Ware Washing Equipment – Dish machine and three compartment sink do not drain

- Place unit out of service
- Remove clog or contact a service professional for further assistance.
- Use dish machine if three compartment sink is out of service. Use three compartment sink if dish machine is out of service.

OR

- Discontinue equipment and utensil washing and use single service items only

OR

- Discontinue operations once all utensils and equipment have been used and no other alternative method is available.
- If continuous overflow of discharge water is present, see section “Continuous Overflow of Sewage” for further instruction.
- Once the issue has been resolved, sanitize all sink basins with a sanitizing solution containing 50-100ppm of liquid bleach. Be sure to have sanitizing test strips available to determine the concentration.

Cleaning Procedures - Sewage Overflow

Personal Health and Safety Guidelines:

- Wear Eye Protection
- Wear rubber boots that can be washed and sanitized after the event
- Wear protective clothing that will not allow for skin to make contact wastewater overflow. Example: Coveralls
- Do not allow employees access to affected area without proper personal protective equipment.
- Wear gloves to protect hands
- Although it not required it is highly recommend that masks be applied during clean-up.
- Remove gloves and wash hands frequently.
- Once the clean-up has been completed, remove gloves and wash hands vigorously for 20 seconds using soap and hot water.

General Clean-Up:

- Remove any standing sewage. Change mop water frequently. Discard mop heads after cleaning is complete.
- Single service items that may have come in contact with wastewater must be thrown away.
- Affected walls, floors and non-food equipment surfaces must be cleaned with soap and water. The equipment should then be sanitized with a chlorine bleach and water solution containing no more than 1 cup of bleach per 1 gallon of water. Unscented bleach is preferred. Allow floors, walls, ceilings and equipment to air dry.
- Utensils that may have come in contact with the wastewater overflow must be washed, rinsed and sanitized using the three compartment sink or dish machine. It is advised that utensils go through the wash, rinse, and sanitize process more than once to remove any wastewater residual.
- Remove wet materials. Dispose of any materials that cannot be effectively cleaned and sanitized.
- Launder all affected linens and uniforms. Launder separately from other linens.

General Food Salvage Assessment:

The following food items must be discarded if there is any question as to whether or not they may have come into contact with wastewater. Remember: "When in doubt, throw it out!"

- Alcoholic Beverage Containers (liquor, beer, and/or wine)
- Exposed foods, bulk food items, fresh produce, meat, poultry, fish and eggs.
- Food in screw-top, crimped cap (soda-pop), and snap-open
- Food in flexible packaging, paper, cardboard, cellophane, and plastic film.
- Single-service items
- Cans that are dented, leaking, bulging or rusted.

What can be salvaged?

- Foods in undamaged metal cans or retort pouches.

Steps for Reconditioning:

Reconditioning: Although the Health Department strongly encourages all food items affected by wastewater be discarded, food cans that have no visible signs of damage can be sanitized in a bleach solution and reused. Steps for reconditioning are shown below:

- Inspect cans
- Remove labels
- Wash containers in soap or detergent solution. Brushing as necessary
- Rinse in potable water
- Buff to remove surface rust (heavily rusted cans must be discarded)
- Disinfect by immersing the cans in a 100 parts per million (ppm) chlorine bleach solution.
- Dry thoroughly
- Re-label expiration date and product name using permanent marker. If expiration date is unknown, the product must be discarded.