

## Storm and Sanitary Sewer Use

### Home Owners Guide to Sewer Use



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF

# ST. THOMAS

Environmental Services Department  
545 Talbot Street  
St. Thomas, Ontario  
N5P 3V7

Phone: 631-1680 (Ext. 4169)



## Sewer Use Facts

There are two kinds of sewers that serve different functions at your home.

1. **Sanitary sewers** are connected to your sinks, toilets and dishwasher. These sewers carry water to a wastewater treatment plant before entering the environment.
2. **Storm sewers** carry rain water from the area surrounding your home directly into a river, stream or lake and eventually into your water supply.



### Did You Know?

- Nothing but rain water is allowed in the **storm sewers** outside your home, while only very small amounts of solids, grease and detergents are allowed down the **sanitary sewer**.
- You should avoid the use of food waste grinders that allow food solids and grease to enter the **sanitary sewer** as this can lead to sewer blockages. Costs for the treatment of food solids in sewage can be 4 times higher than composting or landfill.
- It is illegal to have bathrooms, laundry, or any other sanitary source connected to a **storm sewer**. These sources must be connected to a **sanitary sewer** line.
- Roof downspouts must not be connected to the **sanitary sewer**. Rain flow should be directed to the ground or a **storm sewer** in order to reduce the risk of basement flooding.

## By-Law 205-91



The City of St. Thomas controls all waste discharges to municipal sewers, sanitary or storm through **By-Law No. 205-91**.

This By-Law places strict limits on the discharge of specific materials to both sanitary and storm sewers.

**By-Law 205-91** is enforced by the Pollution Control section of the City of St. Thomas and inspectors have the right to visit and inspect any sanitary or storm sewer servicing your property.

### Fines



#### Personal

- First Time Offence: \$ 10, 000.
- Second Time Offence: \$ 25, 000.

#### Corporation

- First Time Offence: \$ 50, 000.
- Second Time Offence: \$ 100, 000.

## Contacts

*For more information contact:*

City of St. Thomas

- **Pollution Control / Spill Response**

(519) 631-1680 x 4169

*For information on disposal of Household Hazardous Wastes such as paint, chemicals and batteries contact:*

CITY OF ST. THOMAS **Community Recycling Centre**

330 South Edgeware Road, St. Thomas, ON

Call: (519) 631-1680

G. Balsden V.HOGSU Aug 22, 2005



# Storm Sewers - For Rain Only

Best Management Practices	Explanation
<p>Nothing but RAIN water is allowed in the <b>storm sewers</b> around your home:</p>	
<p>1. Keep your vehicles well maintained and clean up any oil or other vehicle spills from your driveway.</p>	<p>Even the smallest spills from your vehicles will slowly reach the storm sewer and enter the creeks near your home.</p>
<p>2. Store oil, gasoline, antifreeze and any other vehicle products in properly sealed storage containers, away from storm drainage areas.</p>	<p>Leaky containers may be allowing contamination to enter a storm sewer without your knowledge. Storm drainage eventually enters nearby natural watercourses.</p>
<p>3. Instead of using store bought fertilizers, try using compost piles as a means of supplying the proper nutrients to your lawn and garden.</p>	<p>Compost slowly releases nutrients, while store bought fertilizers may add too much all at once. This excess fertilizer may then flow directly to a storm drain.</p>
<p>4. Never wash paint brushes or rollers in a storm sewer outside your home or in the roadway storm drains.</p>	<p>Paints and solvents washed in a storm sewer will travel into your local stream and into your drinking water supply.</p>
<p>5. Wash your vehicles at a local carwash or on your lawn.</p>	<p>Carwashes are attached to the sanitary sewer, so there is no contamination of the storm sewers. Washing your car on the grass will prevent oily water and soap suds from entering the storm drain.</p>



# Sanitary Sewer

Best Management Practices	Explanation
<p>1. Do not pour solvents, fuels or paints down your drains. These substances should be taken to your local Household Hazardous Waste Depot (see contact info).</p>	<p>These substances are hazardous, flammable and cause odours that may enter other homes. They may also complicate the treatment process.</p>
<p>2. Scrape food wastes and grease from dishes into a garbage or waste grease container.</p>	<p>This will reduce the amount of material entering the sanitary line, and will therefore reduce clogging.</p>
<p>3. Use a composter or a compost heap for organics such as food and lawn clippings.</p>	<p>Composters are an excellent way to dispose of excess food waste, save money on fertilizer, and to prevent sanitary sewer clogs.</p>
<p>4. Let fat, oil and grease cool, then spread it evenly over your compost or place it into the garbage.</p>	<p>Because these substances are organic they can be effectively mixed into your compost.</p>
<p>5. Place condoms, tampons, razor blades and any other personal hygiene products in the garbage and not down the toilet.</p>	<p>These materials will consistently clog sanitary sewer lines and cost you money to have a plumber free the line.</p>