SEWER USE BY-LAW

PROTECTING OUR SEWER SYSTEM STARTS WITH PROPER DISPOSAL.
The City of St. Thomas regulates discharges to municipal sanitary and storm sewers under By-Law No. 82-2024. The By-Law places limits on materials that may be discharged to municipal sewers and is enforced by the City's Pollution Control section.

Pollution Control inspectors have the right to inspect sanitary or storm sewers servicing your home.

FINES

Personal
First Time Offence: $ 10,000
Second Time Offence: $ 25,000
Corporation
First Time Offence: $ 50,000
Second Time Offence: $ 100,000



SPILL RESPONSE CONTACT NUMBERS

City of St. Thomas Pollution Control
Spill Response
519-631-1098 X 6222

Ministry of the Environment,
Conservation and Parks
1-519-873-5000
Spills Action Centre:
1-800-268-6060

QUESTIONS OR MORE INFORMATION?

(t) 519-631-1098 x 6222
clacroix@stthomas.ca

Mailing Address:
Environmental Services
PO Box 520
545 Talbot St.
St. Thomas, ON
N5P 3V7

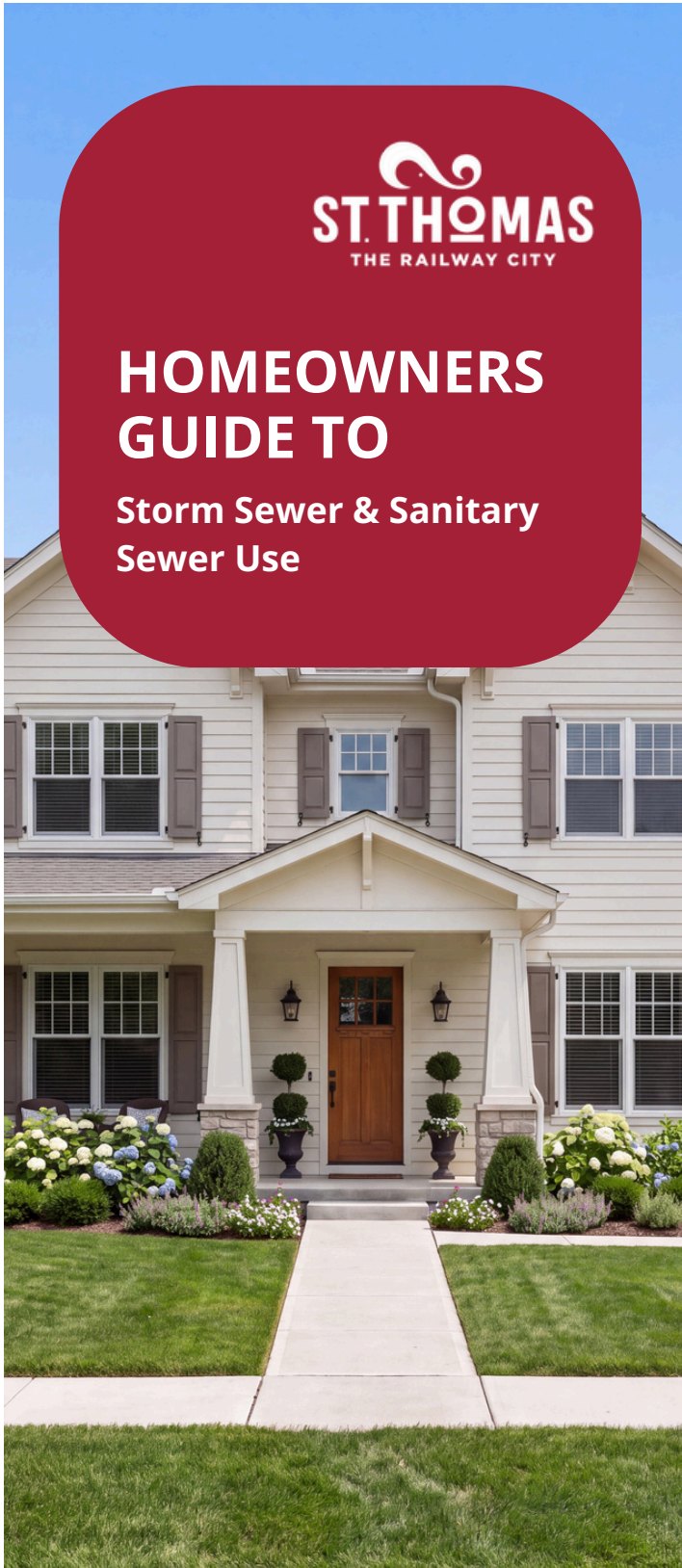
Scan the QR code for more information about sewer use and spill prevention.

ST. THOMAS
THE RAILWAY CITY

ST. THOMAS
THE RAILWAY CITY

HOMEOWNERS GUIDE TO

Storm Sewer & Sanitary Sewer Use



SEWER USE FACTS

There are 2 types of municipal sewers that may be servicing your home:

Sanitary sewers are connected to your sinks, toilets and dishwasher. These sewers carry water to a wastewater treatment plant for entering the environment.

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?

- Only rainwater should enter storm sewers. Sanitary sewers can accept wastewater containing limited amounts of solids, grease, and detergents, within applicable discharge limits.
- Avoid using food waste grinders that send food solids and grease into the sanitary sewer, as they can cause blockages. Treating food waste through sewage systems can cost up to four times more than composting or landfill disposal.
- Bathrooms, laundry facilities, and other sanitary sources must connect to the sanitary sewer, never the storm sewer.
- Roof downspouts must not connect to the sanitary sewer. Direct rainwater onto the ground or into an approved stormwater system to help reduce the risk of basement flooding.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

1. PREVENT VEHICLE LEAKS AND SPILLS

What to do: Maintain vehicles and clean up oil, fuel, and other fluid spills in driveways and parking areas promptly.
Why it matters: Rain can carry pollutants into storm drains and nearby waterways.

2. STORE CHEMICALS AND FUELS SAFELY

What to Do: Store oil, gasoline, antifreeze, and other vehicle products in sealed, leak-proof containers away from storm drains.
Why It Matters: Leaks can contaminate stormwater and pollute local streams, rivers, and lakes.

3. USE COMPOST INSTEAD OF EXCESS FERTILIZER

What to Do: Use compost to improve soil and apply lawn and garden fertilizers sparingly, following label directions.
Why It Matters: Excess nutrients can wash into storm drains and contribute to water pollution.

4. DISPOSE OF PAINT AND SOLVENTS PROPERLY

What to Do: Never wash paintbrushes or rollers in outdoor storm drains or on roadways. Take leftover paint and solvents to an approved household hazardous waste depot.
Why It Matters: Paint and solvents can enter waterways and contaminate the environment.

5. WASH VEHICLES AT APPROVED FACILITIES

What to Do: Wash vehicles at a commercial carwash with an appropriate wastewater disposal system.
Why It Matters: Carwash wastewater contains soap, oils, dirt, and other pollutants that should not enter storm drains.

6. DISPOSE OF HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS PROPERLY

What to Do: Never pour solvents, fuels, paints, or other hazardous chemicals down drains. Take them to an approved hazardous waste depot.
Why It Matters: These substances can create hazardous fumes, damage sewer infrastructure, and interfere with wastewater treatment.

7. KEEP FOOD WASTE OUT OF DRAINS

What to Do: Scrape food scraps and grease from dishes into the garbage or a designated food waste container before washing.
Why It Matters: Food solids and grease can build up in pipes, causing blockages and sewer backups.

8. COMPOST FOOD SCRAPS AND YARD WASTE

What to Do: Compost suitable food scraps, coffee grounds, and lawn clippings using a backyard composter or municipal green bin program.
Why It Matters: Composting reduces waste entering the sewer system and turns organic material into a useful soil amendment.

9. DISPOSE OF FATS, OILS, AND GREASE PROPERLY

What to Do: Let fats, oils, and grease cool, then collect them for appropriate disposal or an approved organics program. Never pour them down the drain.
Why It Matters: Grease can harden inside pipes, causing costly blockages and sewer backups.

10. KEEP PERSONAL HYGIENE PRODUCTS OUT OF TOILETS

What to Do: Dispose of personal hygiene products and other non-flushable items in the garbage rather than flushing them down the toilet. Flush only toilet paper and human waste.
Why It Matters: These items can clog sewer pipes, damage pumps, and lead to expensive plumbing repairs.