

ROSSBURN MUNICIPALITY
POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL

Reference Utility Services	Classification Policy 2015-33A
Subject Sewer Backup Policy	Pages
Authority Council	Effective Date March 24, 2020
Approved March 24, 2020 Resolution # 2020-107	Index UT 2015-33

POLICY STATEMENT:

The following Policy deals with the backup of sanitary sewer into private residences and businesses. It is intended to cover only sanitary sewer backup and is not applicable to the storm water drainage system.

The Municipality's ownership of the wastewater collection and treatment systems in the Town of Rossburn and its responsibilities to protect the health and welfare of the citizens of the Town of Rossburn require the municipality to assure that blockages in sewer service lines are cleared as quickly as possible.

Sewer Service Lines are the responsibility of the property owner up to and including the sewer clean-out on the municipal-owned right-of-way. Private sewer clean-outs are always the responsibility of the property owner. Where no clean-out on municipal-owned right-of-way exists, the property owner is solely responsible for the sewer service line up to and including where it is connected into the sewer main. The sewer service line is defined as the length of sewer line that connects a residence or other structure with the sewer main including the clean-out, clean-out cap and any other appurtenances attached thereto. The Rossburn Municipality is responsible for the service line, excluding the clean-out, from the bottom of the clean-out to the sewer main line.

It is the responsibility of each property owner who has a structure connected to the municipal wastewater treatment system to make sure the sewer service line is installed properly and is maintained in proper working condition. Property owners are responsible for ensuring clean-outs on the right-of-way are visible. Municipal employees will not attempt to locate clean-outs that are not visible (broken off, buried, hidden, etc.) Property owners are responsible for installation of back water valves and other devices that may be required when plumbing appurtenances on the property are installed lower than existing sewage mains and subject to flooding during high flow periods or when a blockage exists in the sewer main line.



A. First Response

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Municipality shall check to determine if the sanitary sewer main servicing affecting property is flowing normally.

B. Mains

- a. If the sanitary sewer backup has its origins within the sanitary sewer main, the Municipality is responsible for all the costs required to restore the sewer to proper operating conditions.
- b. Any backup into basements are not the responsibility of the Municipality. No claims for compensations shall be considered unless negligence can be proven on the part of the Municipality, its employees or authorized representatives.
- c. If the Municipality or its agents are proven negligent and have caused the backup, the Municipality pays all costs including those that incurred on private property.
- d. If any property owner incurs damages to a property or building due to a sanitary sewer main backup and the owner wishes to claim compensation, the owner must submit a written claim to the Municipality's Insurance Company only if there is a case of negligence.

C. Services – Private

If no problems are found with the sanitary sewer main, the Municipality shall advise the owner:

- a) to obtain the services of a plumber to check the sanitary sewer service to determine the nature and type of blockage;
- b) if the blockage is located in the area of the service line that is the property owner's responsibility, the owner is responsible for all costs associated with the sewer backup.

D. Services – Municipality

If the plumber determines that the blockage is beyond the private portion of the sewer service line, the following conditions will apply:

- a) if the blockage is caused by grease, hair and other foreign objects found in the sanitary sewer service causing the blockage, the owner is responsible for all the costs;
- b) if the blockage is caused by a collapsed or misaligned service line, the Municipality will pay all costs to repair the sewer service, including the plumbing costs incurred by the owner to discover the cause of the problem. The Municipality will not be responsible for any cleanup of basement for sewer that has backed up into the basement unless negligence can be shown;



E. Sewer Blockage - Due to Root Buildup

- a. Root blockage of sanitary sewer mains shall be dealt with as per under Section B dealing with Mains;
- b. **Root blockage of a sewer service:** ownership of the origin of the roots will determine which party is responsible for costs of unblocking the line. If origin of the roots cannot be definitively determined, the cost will be shared 50/50 by the property owner and the municipality.

F. Municipality Assistance to Private Property Owners

- a. To assist in the determination in the cause of a sanitary sewer blockage, the owner may request the Municipality to provide a camera inspection.
- b. The Municipality staff will maintain the list of plumbers to ensure that the owner had contacted all possible plumbers;
- c. Property owners are urged to consult a certified plumber regarding the installation of a backup flow preventer valve on their sewer service if they feel there is unwarranted risk of flooding their basement;
- d. Property owners are encouraged to obtain adequate coverage be under their home owner policy for sewer backups;