



# FLOOD SAFETY & REDUCTION TIPS

Homeowners and renters can take these steps to reduce the impact of flooding. Property owners must also maintain their private infrastructure, including the sewer service line. While, the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) has a responsibility to provide a reliable local sewer collection system within the current design standards, and improve stormwater management through engineering innovation including Green Stormwater Infrastructure projects.

## Flood Safety

- Do not walk in standing water in your basement if the area includes fuse box, electrical appliances, outlets, and/or wires.
- Do not drive through flooded streets – take another route and make sure you report the flooding to DWSD (unless a freeway which is the responsibility of the Michigan Department of Transportation).

## Help Prevent Basement Flooding/Sewer Backup

- Make sure there are no debris in your basement drains.
- Clean your gutters if you can safely do so – get help if needed from family or neighbors.
  - Move any items that are blocking the exits of your downspouts.
  - Remove the downspouts from the underground storm pipes and redirect them onto your lawn at least three feet away from the house as shown in the photos here.
- If you see a catch basin covered in trash, please remove the trash and debris.
- Clean debris and leaves from in front of your property to reduce catch basins from clogging.
- Consult with a licensed plumber to:
  - Inspect your sewer service line and drains, including but not limited to snaking your sewer line all the way to the city sewer collection pipe connection and placing a camera in your line to determine if there are any defects that you need to repair.
    - Your sewer line should be snaked at least once per year.
    - Refer to the DWSD checklist, [“Do you have a sewer backup; Looking to hire a plumber?”](#)



- If you have the financial means, consider having a licensed plumber:
  - Install a check valve that closes your sewer line with a flap during rain events to prevent backups – you cannot use your toilets and drains during the rain event to keep the flap closed.
  - Install, inspect, and maintain a sump pump.
  - DWSD is applying for state and federal grants to assist residents in flood-prone neighborhoods and will make future announcements when funding is secured.

## Protect Items in Your Basement

- Don't keep valuables in the basement.
- Use shelves to store items to keep them above the basement floor.
- Store items in plastic tubs with lids.
- Consult with a licensed plumber and HVAC company to:
  - Replace hot water tanks with a tankless water system that is placed on the wall.
  - Have your furnace inspected and see if it can be raised up.

### WHERE'S YOUR LINE?

Most of the city's sewer pipes are located in the rear of the property; a few are located in the street. Sewers are typically in the alley or the city easement in your backyard.

### WHO WILL FIX IT?

Property owners are responsible for the sewer service from the point at which it leaves the house (beneath the basement) and connects to the city sewer.

\*In some neighborhoods the property owner is responsible for the alley.

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AND OURS

### THE SEWER LINE FROM YOUR HOME

